

THE ADVENT

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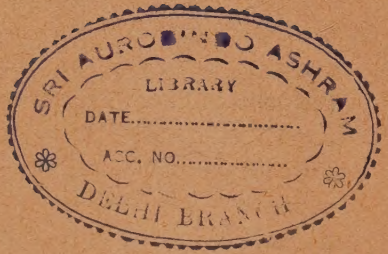
*A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of
Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future*



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Where there is sincerity of heart and selflessness in purpose and an opening to the help from above, difficulties however great can be overcome, overcome or turned in course of time.

SRI AUROBINDO

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No human will can finally prevail against the Divine's Will. Let us put ourselves deliberately and exclusively on the side of the Divine, and the Victory is ultimately certain.

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The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS

MEDITATION AND WAKEFULNESS

TO have good meditation or contact with the inner world, if you are obliged to go into Samadhi, then your normal consciousness will remain always the same without changing. In other words, people who have a higher consciousness only in deep meditation, once they come out of it, are not worth more than what they were before. All their defects are there which they get back as soon as they get back their previous consciousness.¹ Such people never progress; for they never establish a connection between their deeper consciousness, the truth of their being, and their external being. They take off their external being like a robe and put it aside in a corner telling it "keep quiet, my dear friend, you bother

¹ Sri Ramakrishna used to tell a story in this connection. When asked about the purificatory virtue of a dip in the Holy Ganges he answered that the sins leave you as soon as you are about to enter the waters, but they keep waiting on the shore, and directly you are out they pounce upon you and settle in you as merrily as before.

me"—and they enter into contemplation, meditation, their deep experience or realisation; and when they return they put on their robe again which has not changed in the meanwhile, even might have become more dirty than ever. So they remain where they are or become worse, in their outward nature, in spite of their meditation. If you want to change your external being, you must remain conscious of it and while being conscious have other experiences: you must not lose contact with it if you wish to derive full benefit out of your experiences.

There are many such people who meditate for long hours, some almost all the time; but if by chance they are disturbed in their meditation by someone calling them or making noise, they fly into a rage, shout and abuse the whole world; they become more nasty than they would have been had they remained ordinary men without trying meditation. The reason is, as I say, that they neglect to associate their outer life with their deeper consciousness; they cut themselves into two, there is one bit that is within making progress and another bit outside that goes from bad to worse, for it is left wholly uncared for.

ARE NOT THE ASCETIC MEANS HELPFUL AT TIMES?

I do not think. You cure nothing in that way. You give yourself the illusion that you are progressing, but you are really freed of nothing. The proof is that as soon as you stop the practices, the old things come back violently with a vengeance.

But naturally all depends upon the meaning you attach to the word. If it means not yielding to your desires, then it is not asceticism, it is common sense, it is good sense. By asceticism people usually understand fasting, bearing biting cold or burning heat, lying on a bed of sharp nails, that is to say, torturing the body in some way or other. That gives you only self-importance or spiritual egoism, nothing more. You acquire no true control or mastery in this way. People do it because it is so simple and easy, because it satisfies your vanity. You make a show of your ascetic virtues and under the guise hide many other things.

It is much more difficult, however, to master one's impulses quietly, deliberately, prevent them from bursting out instead of mortifying the body with ascetic feats. It is much more difficult not to be attached to things that one possesses than to possess nothing. Yet it is a simple truth

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that has been recognised through ages. To be without possessions or to reduce one's possessions to a minimum is easy: difficult it is not to be attached to whatever you happen to possess. It means a higher degree of moral value. Try to do this simply and you will know what it costs: when a thing comes to you, accept it and use it and if it goes away, for some reason or other, let it go, without regret, without trying to hold it back; not to refuse it when it comes, not to regret when it leaves—naturally, I speak of material objects, things required for use in life.

Physical asceticism does not cure. For the defects are within. You are afraid of contacts from outside and you go to caves and jungles and hilltops, to live all by yourself. But you need no borrowing from others; you carry a sufficient load yourself. In fact if they were not in you, you would not have even detected them in others. You catch the infection from outside, simply because you carry the germs inside. Great waves of passion, one can say with much truth, roll through men, they are not generated in them. But if there is anyone perfectly pure, with no possibility of any passion in him, then such waves may be passing across for centuries together, he will not be affected or touched by them. He may see them, look at them as they pass, like a storm across the sky, but he will not feel.

When there is an answering vibration in us to the vibration outside, it means that the vibration is already there within, otherwise no outside vibration can enter or make an impression. The explanation of a panic—a general fear entering into each and every one of a crowd—lies there. A panic, however, can be stopped, if there were one or two who can resist, who are not touched, who are outside the vibrations. Such individuals can save the situation and prevent the stampede. The thing has happened often. A movement, a vibration, a force is contagious, because the ground of contagion is already there.

Why does not the effort towards progress come always spontaneously, especially for us who are here in the Ashram?

It is because the physical nature in man is usually tamasic. Effort is natural to the vital. But the vital generally makes the effort for its own satisfaction. I do not think that the physical nature left to itself moves spontaneously in the direction of effort; it needs some activity but of a subdued kind.

Here the thing is somewhat different. The principle of education or train-

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ing followed here is that of liberty. Life is organised on the basis of maximum freedom; in other words, rules and regulations, injunctions and prohibitions are reduced to a minimum. If you compare our way with that followed by parents in the world with their constant admonitions: don't do this, that is forbidden, must do this but not that etc. etc., you will find the difference. At the school and the college, everywhere, there are rules infinitely more strict than are found here. So, because no absolute conditions are put upon you for your progress, you do it when it pleases you and you don't do when it does not please you; you take things quite easily.

Of course there are some who do make the effort spontaneously. And that from the spiritual point of view has an infinitely greater value. You make the progress, because you feel within you the need to do so, because it is an impulse that wells up from your depths, not because you are driven by a compelling force outside. What you do spontaneously and sincerely of your own accord is something part and grain of yourself. You do a thing not because if you do it you will be rewarded and if you do not do you will be punished. It might happen however sometimes that something comes to you or into you and gives you the impression that your effort is appreciated but the effort is not due to that. Indeed, things are arranged in such a way here that the satisfaction of having done and done well is the best reward one has and one punishes oneself thoroughly by doing badly or not doing; no other punishment can be more real or more concrete. All this is immensely significant and valuable from the standpoint of spiritual growth, much more than things produced by external regulation and pressure.

What is exactly a spiritual experience?

It is something which puts you in contact with a consciousness higher than that you have ordinarily. You live in a certain state and you do not even know what it is like. That is the ordinary consciousness. Suddenly you become conscious within you of something very different and much superior—that is a spiritual experience, whatever it may be. You may formulate it in a mental idea or you might not, you may explain it or you may not, it may last or it may not, it may be quite momentary. But if there is this difference in the essential quality of the consciousness, signifying something coming from above, from a greater height, something pure and true, pure and truer than anything you normally experience, that I call spiritual experience, although there are a thousand things that belong to that category.

EDITORIALS

LOVE DIVINE

"The intensity of Divine Love does not produce any perturbation in any part of the being" (*The Elements of Yoga*). Why should it? If there is a perturbation, it is more likely that a different kind of love was in question. If it is Divine Love, there can be no perturbation, for each one receives it according to his capacity.

Divine Love is there in its full intensity, as a tremendous force. But most people, 99 out of 100, feel nothing at all. What they feel is exactly in proportion to what they are, what they can receive and hold. Indeed, you are always bathed in an atmosphere vibrant with divine love. Sometimes, on rare occasions, for a few seconds perhaps, there is all on a sudden just the impression of something, and you say: "there, the divine love came to me!" Well, it is a way of saying: the true fact being that for some reason or other you happened to be just a little open and you had the perception of the thing that is always with you. The Love is there, the divine consciousness, too, is there in the same way. They are one, after all. They are there all the while; only you do not feel it or do so only spasmodically. Once in a way you find yourself, without any rhyme or reason as it were, in that happy state and you declare that the divine love has at last turned towards you! But, as I say, the matter is not like that. There came about an opening in you, perhaps no more than a pinpoint, and that was sufficient for the thing to rush in; for the atmosphere is surcharged with it and wherever there is a possibility of its being received, it is received. The same is true of all things divine. They are there: you do not receive or perceive them, because you are closed, shut off, blocked up. You are occupied, most of the time with other things. You are full of yourself, packed with it, and there is no room for anything else. You are not merely passively filled with yourself, but very actively, you are furiously busy with yourself. How can you notice then the marvellous things that are about you, around you? You get a glimpse unawares, perhaps when you are asleep; but it fades away soon. Man's ego is a formidable thing; the whole universe, to him, is a mere function of the ego. You are the centre and the entire creation revolves around you. Such is your vision of the universe. You do not see it as it is; you see only yourself when you look at it.

To begin, then, you must be able to come out of your ego. You will have to enter, as the first step, into something like a state of inexistence. Thereafter only you will begin to see things as they are, that is to say, from a height.

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If you want to see things as they truly are, you must become absolutely like a mirror—silent, peaceful, immobile, impartial, with no preference, in a state of total receptivity. You will begin to see many things that did not seem to be there before, but only now becoming active. Well, you may very well have gone inside one of these things instead of being shut up into a minute spot in the infinite universe, which you call yourself. There are many ways by which you can come out of yourself. Anyhow that is the one thing to be done, if you wish to see the world as it is, not as it seems to be a function of yourself.

Now to come out of the ego, you must have naturally, first of all, the will to do so. The surest way to do it is to give yourself to the Divine, not to pull the Divine towards you but to abandon yourself to Him. That is how you start forgetting yourself. Usually when people think of the Divine, the immediate impulse in them is to pull Him (or whatever they represent him to be) towards themselves, within themselves. The result generally is that they receive nothing; and they complain: "Oh, I called and called, I prayed and prayed, but there was no answer, I received nothing, nothing came". But before complaining, ask yourself if you had offered yourself. You would find that instead of offering yourself you had pulled. Instead of being generous, open-handed and open-hearted, you were a miser, a beggar. When you pull you remain wholly within yourself, shut up, sealed within your ego. You raise a wall of separation between you and the thing that is around you and wants to come in, which is thus not admitted, almost deliberately refused entrance. You enclose yourself within a prison and grumble that you have nothing, feel nothing. At least if you had opened a window you would have had something of the light and air about you.

FROM A VEDIC HYMN★

1. **O** INDRA, drink according to the law of truth the Soma wine;
let the nectar sweetnesses enter into thee, rapturous, that
have there their home.
2. O Maruts, drink according to the truth, purify the Yajna by the pro-
cess of purification for ye are steadfast and very bold.
3. About the Yajna utter for us thy cry, active and exhilarated drink
thou by the truth for thou art the disposer of delight.
4. O Agni, bring hither the gods, make them to sit in the three wombs,
surround all and drink by the truth.
5. O Indra, drink thou the Soma of the soul's bliss according to the truths
of things, for it is thy friendship that never sinks.
6. Do you, O Mitra and Varuna, whose function it is to uphold Daksha
enjoy the Yajna by the truth.
7. The lord of substance laden-handed in the sacrifice propitiateth the
god in the Yajnas.
8. May the lord of substance give to us the riches of which 'tis told; for
these we *pray the gods*.¹
9. The lord of substance would drink, make the offering and stand for-
ward ye subject to the laws of truth by the process of...

SRI AUROBINDO

* Rig Veda I. 15. Riks 1-9

Rishi: Kanva Medhatithi

¹ or, desire in the gods.

GNOSIS AND ANANDA*

THE ascent to the gnosis, the possession of something of the gnostic consciousness, must elevate the soul of man and sublimate his life in the world into a glory of light and power and bliss and infinity that can seem in comparison with the lame action and limited realisations of our present mental and physical existence the very status and dynamis of perfection final and absolute. And it is a true perfection, such as nothing before it has yet been in the ascension of the spirit. For even the highest spiritual realisation on the plane of mentality has in it something top-heavy, one-sided and exclusive; even the widest mental spirituality is not wide enough and it is marred too by its imperfect power of self-expression in life. And yet in comparison with what is beyond it, this too, this first gnostic splendour is only a bright passage to a more perfect perfection. It is the secure and shining step from which we can happily mount still upward into the absolute infinities which are the origin and the goal of the incarnating spirit. In this farther ascension the gnosis does not disappear, but reaches rather its own supreme Light out of which it has descended to mediate between mind and the supreme Infinite.

The Upanishad tells us that after the knowledge-self above the mental is possessed and all the lower selves have been drawn up into it, there is another and the last step of all still left to us—though one might ask, is it eternally the last or only the last practically conceivable or at all necessary for us now?—to take up our gnostic existence into the Bliss-Self and thereby complete the spiritual self-discovery of the divine Infinite. Ananda, the supreme Bliss eternal, far other and higher in its character than the highest human joy or pleasure is the essential and original nature of the spirit. In Ananda our spirit will find its true self, in Ananda its essential consciousness, in Ananda the absolute power of its existence. The embodied soul's entry into this highest absolute, unlimited, unconditional bliss of the spirit is the infinite liberation and the infinite perfection. It is true that something of this bliss can be enjoyed by reflection, by a qualified

* *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Chapter XXXVI Revised by Sri Aurobindo

GNOSIS AND ANANDA

lescent even on the lower planes where the Purusha plays with his modified and qualified Nature. There can be the experience of a spiritual and boundless Ananda on the plane of matter, on the plane of life, on the plane of mind as well as on the gnostic truth-plane of knowledge and above it. And the Yogin who enters into these lesser realisations, may find them so complete and compelling that he will imagine there is nothing greater, nothing beyond it. For each of the divine principles contains in itself the whole potentiality of all the other six notes of our being; each plane of Nature can have its own perfection of these notes under its own conditions. But the integral perfection can come only by a mounting ascent of the lowest into the highest and an incessant descent of the highest into the lowest till all becomes one at once solid block and plastic sea-stuff of the Truth infinite and eternal.

The very physical consciousness in man, the *annamaya puruṣa*, can without this supreme ascent and integral descent yet reflect and enter into the self of Sachchidananda. It can do it either by a reflection of the Soul in physical Nature, its bliss, power and infinity secret but still present here, or by losing its separate sense of substance and existence in the Self within or without it. The result is a glorified sleep of the physical mind in which the physical being forgets itself in a kind of conscious Nirvana or else moves about like a thing inert in the hands of Nature, *jadavat*, like a leaf in the wind, or otherwise a state of pure happy and free irresponsibility of action, *bālavat*, a divine childhood. But this comes without the higher glories of knowledge and delight which belong to the same status upon a more exalted level. It is an inert realisation of Sachchidananda in which there is neither any mastery of the Prakriti by the Purusha nor any sublimation of Nature into her own supreme power, the infinite glories of the Para Shakti. Yet are these two, this mastery and this sublimation, the two gates of perfection, the splendid doors into the supreme Eternal.

The life soul and life consciousness in man, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*, can in the same way directly reflect and enter into the self of Sachchidananda by a large and splendid and blissful reflection of the Soul in universal Life or by losing its separate sense of life and existence in the vast Self within or without it. The result is either a profound state of sheer self-oblivion or else an action driven irresponsibly by the life nature, an exalted enthusiasm of self-abandonment to the great world-energy in its vitalistic dance. The outer being lives in a God-possessed frenzy careless of itself and the world, *umattavat*, or with an entire disregard whether of the conventions and

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proprieties of fitting human action or of the harmony and rhythms of greater Truth. It acts as the unbound vital being, *piśacavat*, the divine maniac or else the divine demoniac. Here too there is no mastery or supreme sublimation of nature. There is only a joyful static possession by the Soul within us and an unregulated dynamic possession by the physical and the vital Nature without us.

The mind-soul and mind consciousness in man, *manomaya puruṣa*, can in the same direct way reflect and enter into Sachchidananda by a reflection of the Soul as it mirrors itself in the nature of pure universal mind luminous, unvalled, happy, plastic, illimitable, or by absorption in the vast free unconditioned uncentred Self within it and without it. The result is either an immobile cessation of all mind and action or a desire-free unbound action watched by the unparticipating inner Witness. The mental being becomes the eremite soul alone in the world and careless of all human ties or the secret soul that lives in a rapturous God-nearness or felicitous identity and in joyful relations of pure love and ecstasy towards all creatures. The mental being may even realise the Self in all three planes together. Then he is aware of these things alternately, successively or at once. Or he may transform the lower forms into manifestations of the higher state; he may draw upward the childlikeness or the inert irresponsibility of the free physical mind or the free vital mind's divine madness and carelessness of all rules, proprieties, harmonies and colour or disguise with them the ecstasy of the saint or the solitary liberty of the wandering eremite. Here again there is no mastery, no sublimation of the Nature by the soul in the world, but a double possession, by the freedom and delight of the mental spiritual infinite within and without by the happy, natural and unregulated play of the mind-Nature. But since the mental being is capable of receiving the gnosis in a way in which the life soul and physical soul cannot receive it, since he can accept with knowledge though only the limited knowledge of a mental response, he may to a certain extent govern by its light his outer action or, if not that, at least bathe and purify in it his will and his thinkings. But Mind can arrive only at a compromise between the infinite within and the finite nature without; it cannot pour the infinity of the inner being's knowledge and power and bliss with any sense of fullness into its external action which remains always inadequate. Still it is content and free because it is the Lord within who takes up the responsibility of the action adequate or inadequate and assumes its guidance and fixes its consequence.

But the gnostic soul, the *viññānamaya puruṣa*, is the first to participate

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not only in the freedom, but in the power and sovereignty of the Eternal. For it receives the fullness, it has the sense of plenitude of the Godhead in its action; it shares the free, splendid and royal march of the Infinite, is a vessel of the original knowledge, the immaculate power, the inviolable bliss, transmutes all life into the eternal Light and the eternal Fire and the eternal Wine of the nectar. It possesses the finite of the Self and it possesses the infinite of Nature. It does not so much lose as find its nature self in the self of the Infinite. On the other planes to which the mental being has easier access, man finds God in himself and himself in God; he becomes divine in essence rather than in person or nature. In the gnosis, even the mentalised gnosis, the Divine Eternal possesses, changes and stamps the human symbol, envelops and partly finds himself in the person and nature. The mental being at most receives or reflects that which is true, divine and eternal; the gnostic soul reaches a true identity, possesses the spirit and powers of the truth-Nature. In the gnosis the dualism of the Purusha and Prakriti, Soul and Nature, two separate powers complementary to each other, the great truth of the Sankhyas founded on the practical truth of our present natural existence disappears in this biune entity, the dynamic mystery of the occult Supreme. The Truth-being is the Hara-Gauri¹ of the Indian iconological symbol; it is the double Power masculine-feminine born from and supported by the supreme Shakti of the Supreme.

Therefore the truth-soul does not arrive at self-oblivion in the Infinite; it comes to an eternal self-possession in the Infinite. Its action is not irregular; it is a perfect control in an infinite freedom. In the lower planes the soul is naturally subject to Nature and the regulating principle is found in the lower nature; all regulation there depends on the acceptance of a strict subjection to the law of the finite. If the soul on these planes withdraws from that law into the liberty of the infinite, it loses its natural centre and becomes centreless in a cosmic infinitude, it forfeits the living harmonic principle by which its external being was till then regulated and it finds no other. The personal nature or what is left of it merely continues mechanically for a while its past movements, or it dances in the gusts and falls of the universal energy that acts on the individual system rather than in that system, or it strays in the wild steps of an irresponsible ecstasy, or it remains inert and abandoned by the breath of the Spirit that was within it. If on the other hand the soul moves in its impulse of freedom towards the

¹ The biune body of the Lord and his Spouse, Ishwara and Shakti, the right half male, the left half female.

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discovery of another and divine centre of control through which the Infinite can consciously govern its own action in the individual, it is moving towards the gnosis where that centre preexists, the centre of an eternal harmony and order. It is when he ascends above mind and life to the gnosis that the Purusha becomes the master of his own nature because subject only to supreme Nature. For there force or will is the exact counterpart, the perfect dynamis of the divine knowledge. And that knowledge is not merely the eye of the Witness, it is the immanent and compelling gaze of the Ishwara. Its luminous governing power, a power not to be hedged in or denied, imposes its self-expressive force on all the action and makes true and radiant and authentic and inevitable every movement and impulse.

The gnosis does not reject the realisations of the lower planes; for it is not an annihilation or extinction, not a Nirvana but a sublime fulfilment of our manifested Nature. It possesses the first realisations under its own conditions after it has transformed them and made them elements of a divine order. The gnostic soul is the child, but the king-child;¹ here is the royal and eternal childhood whose toys are the worlds and all universal Nature is the miraculous garden of the play that tires never. The gnosis takes up the condition of divine inertia; but this is no longer the inertia of the subject soul driven by Nature like a fallen leaf in the breath of the Lord. It is the happy passivity bearing an unimaginable intensity of action and Ananda of the Nature-Soul at once driven by the bliss of the mastering Purusha and aware of herself as the supreme Shakti above and around him and mastering and carrying him blissfully on her bosom for ever. This biune being of Purusha-Prakriti is as if a flaming Sun and body of divine Light self-carried in its orbit by its own inner consciousness and power at one with the universal, at one with a supreme Transcendence. Its madness is a wise madness of Ananda, the incalculable ecstasy of a supreme consciousness and power vibrating with an infinite sense of freedom and intensity in its divine life-movements. Its action is supra-rational and therefore to the rational mind which has not the key it seems a colossal madness. And yet this that seems madness is a wisdom in action that only baffles the mind by the liberty and richness of its contents and the infinite complexity in fundamental simplicity of its motions, it is the very method of the Lord of the worlds, a thing no intellectual interpretation can fathom—a dance this also, a whirl of mighty energies, but the Master of the dance holds the hands of His energies and keeps them to the rhythmic order.

¹ So Heraclitus, "The kingdom is of the child."

GNOSIS AND ANANDA

the self-traced harmonic circles of his Rasa-lila. The gnostic soul is not bound any more than the divine demoniac by the petty conventions and proprieties of the normal human life or the narrow rules through which it makes some shift to accommodate itself with the perplexing dualities of the lower nature and tries to guide its steps among the seeming contradictions of the world, to avoid its numberless stumbling blocks and to foot with gingerly care around its dangers and pitfalls. The gnostic supramental life is abnormal to us because it is free to all the hardihoods and audacious delights of a soul dealing fearlessly and even violently with Nature, but yet it is the very normality of the infinite and all governed by the law of the Truth in its exact unerring process. It obeys the law of a self-possessed Knowledge, Love, Delight in an innumerable Oneness. It seems abnormal only because its rhythm is not measurable by the faltering beats of the mind, but yet it steps in a wonderful and transcendent measure.

And what then is the necessity of a still higher step and what difference is there between the soul in gnosis and the soul in the Bliss? There is no essential difference, but yet a difference, because there is a transfer to another consciousness and a certain reversal in position,—for each step of the ascent from Matter to the highest Existence there is a reversal of consciousness. The soul no longer looks up to something beyond it, but is in it and from it looks down on all that it was before. On all planes indeed the Ananda can be discovered because everywhere it exists and is the same. Even there is a repetition of the Ananda plane on each lower world of consciousness. But in the lower planes not only is it reached by a sort of dissolution into it of the pure mind or the life-sense or the physical awareness; but it is, as it were, itself diluted by the dissolved form of mind, life or matter held in the dilution, and turned into a poor thinness wonderful to the lower consciousness but not comparable to its true intensities. The gnosis has on the contrary a dense light of essential consciousness¹ in which the intense fullness of the Ananda can be. And when the form of gnosis is dissolved into the Ananda, it is not annulled altogether, but undergoes a natural change by which the soul is carried up into its last and absolute freedom; for it casts itself into the absolute existence of the spirit and is enlarged into its own entirely self-existent bliss infinitudes. The gnosis has the infinite and absolute as the conscious source, accompaniment, condition, standard, field and atmosphere of all its activities, it possesses it as its base, fount, constituent material, indwelling and inspiring Presence; but

¹ Chidghana

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in its action it seems to stand out from it as its operation, as the rhythmic working of its activities, as a divine Maya¹ or Wisdom-Formation of the Eternal. Gnosis is the divine Knowledge-Will of the divine Consciousness-Force; it is harmonic consciousness and action of Prakriti-Purusha—full of the delight of the divine existence. In the Ananda the knowledge goes back from these willed harmonies into pure self-consciousness, the will dissolves into pure transcendent force and both are taken up into the pure delight of the Infinite. The basis of the gnostic existence is the self-stuff and self-form of the Ananda.

This in the ascension takes place because there is here completed the transition to the absolute unity of which the gnosis is the decisive step but not the final resting-place. In the gnosis the soul is aware of its infinity and lives in it, yet it lives also in a working centre for the individual play of the Infinite. It realises its identity with all existences, but it keeps distinction without difference by which it can have also the contact with them in a certain diverseness. This is that distinction for the joy of contact which in the mind becomes not only difference, but in its self-experience division from our other selves, in its spiritual being a sense of loss of self, one with us in others and a reaching after the felicity it has forfeited, in life a compromise between egoistic self-absorption and a blind seeking out for the lost oneness. In its infinite consciousness, the gnostic soul creates a sort of voluntary limitation for its own wisdom-purposes; it has even its particular luminous aura of being in which it moves, although beyond that it enters into all things and identifies itself with all being and all existences. In the Ananda all is reversed, the centre disappears. In the bliss nature there is no centre, nor any voluntary or imposed circumference, but all is, all are one equal being, one identical spirit. The bliss soul finds and feels itself everywhere; it has no mansion, is *aniketa*, or has the all for its mansion, or, if it likes, it has all things for its many mansions open to each other for ever. All other selves are entirely its own selves, in action as well as in essence. The joy of contact in diverse oneness becomes altogether the joy of absolute identity in innumerable oneness. Existence is no longer formulated in the terms of the Knowledge, because the knower and knowledge and the knower are wholly one self here and, since all possesses all in an intimate identity beyond the closest closeness, there is no need of what we call knowledge. All the consciousness is of the bliss of

¹ Not in the sense of illusion, but in the original Vedic significance of the word Maya. All in the gnostic existence is real, spiritually concrete, eternally verifiable.

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the Infinite, all power is power of the bliss, of the Infinite, all forms and activities are forms and activities of the bliss of the Infinite. In this absolute truth of its being the eternal soul of Ananda lives, here deformed by contrary phenomena, there brought back and transfigured into their reality.

The soul lives: it is not abolished, it is not lost in a featureless Indefinite. For on every plane of our existence the same principle holds; the soul may fall asleep in a trance of self-absorption, dwell in an ineffable intensity of God-possession, live in the highest glory of its own plane,—the Ananda-loka, Brahmaloka, Vaikuntha, Goloka of various Indian systems,—even turn upon the lower worlds to fill them with its own light and power and beatitude. In the eternal worlds and more and more in all worlds above Mind these states exist in each other. For they are not separate; they are coexistent, even coincident powers of the consciousness of the Absolute. The Divine on the Ananda plane is not incapable of a world-play or self-rebarred from any expression of its glories. On the contrary, as the Upanishad insists, the Ananda is the true creative principle. For all takes birth from this divine Bliss;¹ all is preexistent in it as an absolute truth of existence which the Vijnana brings out and subjects to voluntary limitation by the Idea and the law of the Idea. In the Ananda all law ceases and there is an absolute freedom without binding term or limit. It is superior to all principles and in one and the same motion the enjoyer of all principles; it is free from all gunas and the enjoyer of its own infinite gunas; it is above all forms and the builder and enjoyer of all its self-forms and figures. This unimaginable completeness is what the spirit is, the spirit transcendent and universal, and to be one in bliss with the transcendent and universal spirit is for the soul too to be that and nothing less. Necessarily, since there is on this plane the absolute and the play of absolutes, it is ineffable by any of the conceptions of our mind or by signs of the phenomenal or ideal realities of which mind-conceptions are the figures in our intelligence. These realities are themselves indeed only relative symbols of those ineffable absolutes. The symbol, the expressive reality, may give an idea, perception, sense, vision, contact even of the thing itself to us, but at last we get beyond it to the thing it symbolises, transcend idea, vision, contact, pierce through the ideal and pass to the real realities, the identical, the supreme, the timeless and eternal, the infinitely infinite.

Our first absorbing impulse when we become inwardly aware of something

¹ Therefore the world of the Ananda is called the Janaloka, in the double sense of birth and delight.

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entirely beyond what we now are and know and are powerfully attracted to it, is to get away from the present actuality and dwell in that higher reality altogether. The extreme form of this attraction when we are drawn to the supreme Existence and the infinite Ananda is the condemnation of the lower and the finite as an illusion and an aspiration to Nirvana in the beyond—the passion for dissolution, immersion, extinction in the spirit. But the real dissolution, the true *nirvāṇa* is the release of all that is bindingly characteristic of the lower into the larger being of the Higher, the conscious possession of the living symbol, by the living Real. We discover in the end that not only is that higher Reality the cause of all the rest, not only does it embrace and exist in all the rest, but as more and more we possess it, all the rest is transformed in our soul-experience into a superior value and becomes the means of a richer expression of the Real, a more many-sided communion with the Infinite, a larger ascent to the Supreme. Finally, we get close to the absolute and its supreme values which are the absolutes of all things. We lose the passion for release, *mumukṣutva*, which till then actuated us, because we are now intimately near to that which is ever free from that which is neither attracted into attachment by what binds us now nor afraid of what to us seems to be bondage. It is only by the loss of the bound soul's exclusive passion for its freedom that there can come an absolute liberation of our nature. The Divine attracts the souls of men to him by various lures; all of them are born of its own relative and imperfect conception of bliss; all are its ways of seeking for the Ananda, but, if clung to till the end, miss the inexpressible truth of those surpassing felicities. First in order comes the lure of an earthly reward, a prize of material, intellectual, ethical or other joy in the terrestrial mind and body. A second, more or greater version of the same fruitful error is the hope of a heavenly bliss far exceeding these earthly rewards; the conception of heaven rises in altitude and purity till it reaches the pure idea of the eternal presence of God or an unending union with the Eternal. And last we get the subtlest of all lures, an escape from these worldly or heavenly joys and from all pains and sorrows, effort and trouble and from all phenomenal things, a Nirvana—a self-dissolution in the Absolute, an Ananda of cessation and ineffable peace. In the end all these toys of the mind have to be transcended. The fear of birth and the desire of escape from birth must entirely fall away from us. For, to repeat the ancient language, the soul that has realised oneness has no sorrow or shrinking; the spirit that has entered into the bliss of oneness has nought to fear from anyone or anything whatsoever. Fear, des-

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and sorrow are diseases of the mind; born of its sense of division and limitation, they cease with the falsehood that begot them. The Ananda is free from these maladies; it is not the monopoly of the ascetic, it is not born from the disgust of existence.

The bliss soul is not bound to birth or to non-birth; it is not driven by desire of the Knowledge or harassed by fear of the Ignorance. The supreme bliss Soul has already the knowledge and transcends all need of knowledge. Not limited in consciousness by the form and the act, it can play with the manifestation without being imbued with the Ignorance. Already it is taking its part above in the mystery of an eternal manifestation and here, when the time comes, will descend into birth without being the slave of Ignorance chained to the revolutions of the wheel of Nature. For it knows that the purpose and law of the birth-series is for the soul in the body to rise from plane to plane and substitute always the rule of the higher for the rule of the lower play even down to the material field. The bliss-soul neither disdains to help that ascent from above nor fears to descend down the stairs of God into the material birth and there contribute the power of its own bliss nature to the upward pull of the divine forces. The time for that marvellous hour of the evolving Time-Spirit is not yet come. Man, generally, cannot yet ascend to the bliss nature; he has first to secure himself on the higher mental altitudes, to ascend from them to the gnosis, still less can he bring down all the Bliss-Power into this terrestrial Nature; he must first cease to be mental man and become superhuman. All he can do now is to receive something of its power into his soul in greater or less degree, by a diminishing transmission through an inferior consciousness; but even that gives him the sense of an ecstasy and an unsurpassable beatitude.

And what will be the bliss nature when it manifests in a new supramental race? The fully evolved soul will be one with all beings in the status and dynamic effects of experience of a bliss-consciousness intense and illimitable. And since love is the effective power and soul-symbol of bliss-oneness he will approach and enter into this oneness by the gate of universal love, the sublimation of human love at first, a divine love afterwards, at its summits a thing of beauty, sweetness and splendour now to us inconceivable. He will be one in bliss-consciousness with all the world-play and its powers and happenings and there will be banished for ever the sorrow and fear, the hunger and pain of our poor and darkened mental and vital and physical existence. To get that power of the bliss-freedom in which all the conflicting principles of our being shall be unified in their absolute values.

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All evil shall perforce change itself into good; the universal beauty of the All beautiful will take possession of its fallen kingdoms; every darkness will be converted into a pregnant glory of light and the discords which the mind creates between Truth and Good and Beauty, Power and Love and Knowledge will disappear on the eternal summit, in the infinite extensions where they are always one.

The Purusha in mind, life and body is divided from Nature and in conflict with her. He labours to control and coerce what he can embody of her by his masculine force and is yet subject to her afflicting dualities and in fact her plaything from top to bottom, beginning to end. In the gnosis he is reunited with her, finds as master of his own nature their reconciliation and harmony by their essential oneness even while he accepts an infinite blissful subjection, the condition of his mastery and his liberties, to the Supreme in his sovereign divine Nature. In the tops of the gnosis and in the Ananda He is one with the Prakriti and no longer solely united with her. There is no longer the baffling play of Nature with the soul in the Ignorance; all is the conscious play of the soul with itself and all its selves and the Supreme and the divine Shakti in its own and the infinite bliss nature. This is the supreme mystery, the highest secret, simple to our experience, however difficult and complex to our mental conceptions and the effort of our limited intelligence to understand what is beyond it. In the free infinity of the self-delight of Sachchidananda there is a play of the divine Child, a *rās līlā* of infinite Lover and its mystic soul-symbols repeat themselves in character of beauty and movements and harmonies of delight in a timeless forever.

SRI AUROBINDO

THE LOGIC OF THE INFINITE★

IN this paper I shall discuss the concept of the Infinite along with the question whether our logical postulates and categories require to be modified or re-interpreted in dealing with the Infinite so that our logic becomes appropriate to its object. I shall begin with a summary of my standpoint in philosophy. I am both an Absolutist and a Theist. The ultimate Reality is infinite, self-existent and beyond all limitations. At the same time the Real is not a metaphysical abstraction, but the Supreme Person. My theism does not contradict the statement that Reality is impersonal, for the predicates 'personal' and 'impersonal' are not exclusive of each other, but reveal the many-sided perfection of the Real who is the Supreme Person. A predicate applied to and accepted by the Infinite is a logical monad and neither implies nor excludes any other predicate. The predicates of the Infinite Subject are, from a logical point of view, unrelated and incommensurable, though existentially they imply, or rather, contain each other. This conclusion is the result of maturing the concept of the Infinite through reflection and forms the main thesis of this paper. It is opposed to the superficial, even fatuous, distinction sometimes made between the Absolute of Metaphysics which is supposed to be the proper object of the intellect and the God of Religion who, we are told, answers the demands of the heart. Muddled thinking is responsible for regarding this distinction as a justification of the religious urge for supreme devotion and surrender. I am unable to subscribe to the view that our religious concepts are true only so long as we do not think seriously about them.

As for the concept of Philosophy, I use the term Philosophy as equivalent to a reasoned system of ideas about Reality and distinguish philosophical knowledge from direct knowledge of Reality which is obtained in mystical experience. I further hold that in Philosophy we must make a critical use of reason, by which I mean that we can take nothing on trust and nothing for granted and that revelation (sruti) which is a record of spiritual experience cannot be taken as a premiss in reasoning. In this sense reason is

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autonomous, but it is not autonomous absolutely. As against Aquinas I would say that the metaphysical use of reason is not possible unless the natural light of reason is aided by the light of faith awakened through revelation. Reason is ontologically not logically dependent on revelation, which means that it is indebted to revelation not for any premiss, but for its basic datum. To explain; our acceptance of the Infinite is not the result of rational considerations; it is immediate and unconditional and therefore supra-rational. The starting point (not premiss) of philosophy is this supra-rational faith in the Infinite, and because it is supra-rational it cannot be awakened by the exercise of the natural light of reason. The awakening of faith can only be effected by revelation. That which is the soul's inmost certainty has still to be revealed to it before it can become conscious of it and explicitly accept it. The common mistake made in European philosophy is to assume that what is not based on reason is therefore unreasonable or at least unproved. Faith can be shown to be reasonable without being based on reason. This is so because reason is not anterior but interior to faith. Since faith is activated by revelation alone, the latter is the matrix of reason. Between reason and revelation there is a relation of ontological dependence, which relation reason, in view of its logical self-sufficiency, is at liberty to deny. But if it does so it denies its only possible link with the Infinite and we are given a philosophy which is blind at its source and so not fully aware of its own significance and function. Such a philosophy is in danger of setting up an arrogant claim to self-sufficiency in knowledge and denying the title of knowledge to mystical experience. Whether we call philosophy knowledge or not will depend on whether we may extend the term knowledge to what is only a symbolic representation of direct knowledge contained in spiritual experience. Philosophy is merely the explicit statement of faith in the language of concepts which are to spiritual experience very much as symbols in logic are to the thought process they symbolize. Faith is the substance not only 'of things hoped for', but of things to be known or realized. The question is often asked, 'Do mystics know?' and secular philosophy fearing to lose its authority, may reply in the negative. No philosophy is in fact secular in the sense of being existentially independent of revelation, but it may be secular in its attitude if it forgets its origin and denies its sacred mission. If by knowledge we mean, as I think we should, the act of realizing our conceptual symbols, then not only is it true that the mystics know, but what is more important, it is true that none but the mystics know. As already explained, the mystic (the channel or instrument

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of revelation) does not impose his authority on the philosopher but merely makes available to him the basic a priori concepts (the datum) which by means of the natural light, are matured into a full-fledged philosophical system. Nor is the distinction between philosophy and mystical experience merely a matter of degree, the latter being presumed to give more adequate knowledge of the same kind. There is an impassable distinction of levels in which the lower is ordered to the higher, and a felt *nisus* at the philosophical level—not felt by those who merely philosophise on a blind impulse—for a new orientation towards those super sensuous truths which philosophy merely reflects but cannot grasp. The *nisus* in philosophy is not the result of an abstraction and one-sided emphasis on the cultivation of a particular set of values to the exclusion or neglect of others. Philosophy is concerned with the entire scheme of values and their right ordering. At the natural level (where man feels he is a being separate from God) Philosophy is not a part of life but the whole of it and embraces all life's activities in its integrated vision. If then it still harbours negation and a dialectical impulse to transcend itself, it is because its early unqualified claim to knowledge is ill-founded. It is precisely as knowledge and not as an activity of knowing that it feels a tension in its very being, the contradiction of possessing the real in the form of ideas and yet not possessing it, since ideas are, as Bradley in correcting the excessive rationalism of Hegel points out, merely ideal contents referred to Reality. The way out of the impasse in which Philosophy necessarily finds itself is not the Bradleian denial of all possibility of knowledge, but the recognition that Philosophy merely prefigures at its own level a knowledge of Reality substantially inaccessible to it, since it merely reflects but does not embody it. Prof. K.C. Bhattacharya once gave an epigrammatic answer to the question whether Philosophy is knowledge. He said, 'In Philosophy the Real is known as what is to be known'. In other words our philosophical credo has to be matured into knowledge.

With this long introduction, necessary to secure my position from the charge of anti-intellectualism, let us now explore the concept of the Infinite. After a very long association of Philosophy with Science, not always a happy one, Science has succeeded in liberating itself from Philosophy and its sister Theology. I think that now the time has come when Philosophy should make a determined effort to liberate itself from the clutches of Science. It is because Philosophy has not yet identified itself wholly with the axiological standpoint, but has approached its problems in the spirit of Science with its emphasis on the Object outside the knowing subject that philo-

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sophers have not attempted in full seriousness to unfold the unimaginably rich potentialities of the concept of the Infinite. This fact coupled with an unfortunate separation between sacred Theology and secular Philosophy has given rise to the doctrine of the 'Mysteries' which are said to be revealed truths incomprehensible to the intellect. All divine mysteries are locked up in the notion of the Infinite which we come to possess with the aid of revelation. Our task as philosophers is not to apply the concept to a datum, nor merely to deduce consequences from it—to do this would be to imitate the inductive and mathematical sciences but to mature the concept, to make it grow, to go on brooding on it till it is fully hatched. Metaphysics is one long sustained attempt at defining more and more clearly our starting point, though not in the manner prescribed by formal logic. This intellectual penetration of the basic concept of philosophy will at once reveal the nature and mysteries of the Infinite and equip us with the appropriate logic to deal with it. Metaphysical reflection is the highest guarantee of the validity of our logical postulates, for logic in the last resort depends on metaphysics, the science of truth and validity *par excellence*. Thus we can only evolve a logic of the Infinite by reflecting on the nature of the Infinite and not by laying down certain rules *ab initio* and compelling thought to follow these rules in dealing with the Infinite. An expansion or modification of logic on metaphysical considerations alone (if at all)—this is a condition which we may ignore only at the cost of permitting every possible kind of nonsense in the name of Philosophy.

This, however, is but one side of the truth, a side for which it is fairly easy to gain recognition. The complementary aspect of the truth must also be insisted on, since it seems hardly to have been noticed except by Hegel and Sri Aurobindo. The latter more than Hegel has dwelt on it as an important issue in philosophy and this paper which owes its inspiration to his conception of the logic of the Infinite is an attempt to argue the need for such a logic and develop some of its implications. For Sri Aurobindo the term 'Logic of the Infinite' stands primarily for the operations or modes of connection in the Divine Reason which are supramental, and secondarily for the workings of the human reason when it consents to take seriously the unique and integral character of the Infinite. Human reason, he suggests, should accustom itself to the Logic of the Infinite and should acquire as far as possible, the utmost plasticity in dealing with the Infinite, otherwise "our mental logic with its constant embarrassed stumbling around a false conception of contradictions" will regard 'co-existent and concurrent

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poises of the Infinite as 'opposed to and incompatible with each other'. In this paper I have used the term 'Logic of the Infinite' to describe human reason in so far as it attempts to deal adequately with its ultimate object.

The complementary aspect of the truth which holds logic in subservience to Metaphysics is that the former comes to a full consciousness of itself only in the latter. Our logic, when it turns from the finite to the Infinite, from the scientific object to the metaphysical subject, has yet to develop its full potentialities, in the course of which it may have to alter and enlarge its framework of categories. Operating within the limited field of science it becomes aware, through internal reflection, of certain presuppositions and postulates; it gives shape to its inherent form which acquires a definite cast or mould. The danger now is that under the impression that logic has grown to its full stature, this form may congeal and become so hard and rigid that the logic grown out of science acquires a false sense of self-sufficiency and begins to dictate to Metaphysics. It assumes as almost axiomatic that it can lay down in advance of all metaphysical thinking the pattern to which the latter must conform. It brings with it a narrow cage of concepts in which it tries to imprison the Infinite itself.

A striking example of this arrested development resulting in a truncated logic, which in its turn permits only a truncated Infinite (shorn of its Mysteries) to escape through its narrow confines is the uncritical application of the so-called laws of thought to Reality, particularly the law of contradiction. Thus it regarded almost as axiomatic that if we describe God as personal and at the same time go on to describe him as impersonal we are violating the law of contradiction, since 'personal' and 'impersonal' are incompatible predicates which cannot be affirmed of the same subject. Thus the notion of incompatibility or opposition is taken as understood and the term 'impersonal' is equated with the negative term 'not-personal'. After this the logic of exclusion that regards affirmation and denial as co-ordinate takes its course and clips the Infinite of its many sided perfection. But this is a logic which has not advanced beyond the scientific level of thought.

It is not my intention to question the validity of the laws of thought, any more than it was Hegel's. They are, in the words of Joachim, basal ontological laws and formulate the barest and most indispensable character of Reality in the form of truth. The question is, what is the correct interpretation and proper content of these 'basal ontological laws'.

Let us consider how the law of contradiction operates within the sphere of finite objects and relations. An object cannot be white and not-white

at the same time and in the same sense. If the term 'not-white' is not to be taken as a barren infinite term, it stands for any positive quality belonging to the same universe of discourse as 'white'. Thus the law forbids us to predicate white and, say, green of the same object. White and green are opposed and mutually repellent qualities in the universe of colour. But is their opposition relative or absolute? An absolute opposition between the two would mean that the presence of one quality anywhere in the universe would be sufficient to exclude the other from the universe. If anything were white then nothing could be green and vice versa. But 'white' and 'green' can and do enjoy 'peaceful co-existence' in the Universe; they do not clash absolutely but only under certain conditions, just as two trains moving towards each other in opposite directions do not collide if they are running on different rails.

The relative character of all opposition may be illustrated by another argument. Opposition implies relation and relation is not possible unless the related terms are somehow held together in a common ground which overcomes their opposition. Extremes must meet even in order to fall apart. Relatedness is a sign of a community of nature, for if two terms were absolutely opposed to each other then they could not get related by way of opposition. Since, however, the mere fact of relatedness does not immediately overcome the tension, it follows that we have necessarily to go beyond the opposing terms to discover the unity which they presuppose.

The logic of opposition thus itself reveals that there is an all-encompassing Reality which over-rides and reconciles all opposites. Conflict and tension are the mark of appearance—they are contained and resolved in the Whole whose harmony remains undisturbed.

If now we shift our attention from the finite to the Infinite, the laws which served us and guided our earlier inquiry cannot retain precisely the same character and form when the Infinite, the reconciler of opposites, emerging from its shadowy background, becomes the direct object of thought. Since the laws are ontological and reveal the general features of objects thought about, a radical difference in the nature of the two objects, the finite and the Infinite, must be expected to make a difference to our Logic, when we pass from the one to the other. The postulate of the Logic of finite existence takes a specific form which is strictly relative to its object. It may be expressed in Spinoza's maxim, Determination is negation, provided we interpret it to mean that negation is an essential element in finite existence. More specifically, predication in the case of a finite object pre-

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supposes a limited universe of discourse which contains qualities which exclude each other when we try to bring them to a common point. Affirmation implies denial. The object accepts a predicate only by excluding others belonging to the same universe of discourse.

In this and the preceding argument I have, I am aware, only repeated Hegel and endorsed his distinction between the logic of Understanding and the logic of Reason. But it seems to me that Hegel did not follow up his discovery of the higher logic and explore its implications. In so far as he admits negation as an element in the Absolute he seems to have given up his search for a more adequate logic to deal with the Infinite.

The Infinite being the Whole, is not an object contained in any universe of discourse. It cannot therefore be a focus of conflicting predicates, unable to support any one predicate except through a rejection of others.

In the case of the Infinite the maxim, Determination is negation, in the sense given to it above, is simply not true. There is however another interpretation of this maxim which would make it applicable to the Infinite. On this interpretation, determination means an affirmation which implies denial and negation means limitation. Thus the maxim would read: to restrict the Infinite to one of a given set of predicates is to limit it.

Thus the basic postulate of the Logic of the Infinite takes shape: There is no negation in the Infinite. All negation is appearance. 'God', as Eckhart says, 'is the denial of all denial'. When we affirm something, it is said, there is something else that we wish to deny. This is precisely not true in the case of any affirmation about the Infinite. If any predicate is offered to the Infinite for its acceptance, it must be offered unconditionally and not with the proviso that the submission of this predicate entails the withholding of some other predicate. Every affirmation that has the Infinite as its subject is a pure affirmation without even an implicit denial. In the Logic of the Infinite every affirmation is self-contained and is not based explicitly or implicitly on denial.

It is meaningless to suggest that the ascription of a predicate to the Infinite implies the denial of the contradictory of the predicate. Either the predicate denied is the formal contradictory of the predicate affirmed or it is a contrary term. In the former case the denial is simply the affirmation itself stated artificially in a negative form. In the latter case, the objection begs the question by assuming that the Infinite is confronted with contrary terms, of which it must choose one to the exclusion of the others.

Predicates are contrary terms only in relation to finite portions of the

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Universe, and opposition itself loses significance in relation to the Infinite Ground of the universe. The proposition "God is not not-A", is not implied in the proposition, "God is A", but is identical with it, while the proposition, "God is not B, since He is A", is false. Whether God who is A can also be B (where A and B would be contrary predicates in a finite universe of discourse) depends, not on the predicate A but on the nature of God. Each predicate must be considered strictly on its own merit and if it is affirmed of God must be affirmed of Him absolutely. A predicate that is denied of God is itself an overt or implicit denial of God and thus the denial of the denial is tantamount to the affirmation that God is complete and self-contained.

There is thus no contradiction in affirming that God is both personal and impersonal. Whether the affirmation is true or not, is a separate question, but one which cannot be decided by the application of the formal rules of reasoning.

The proposition "God is personal", may be restated by an artificial change in mere verbal form as, "God is not not-personal", but not as, 'God is. not impersonal". The predicate impersonal, though negative in form, is positive in content, and as a positive predicate is neither the contradictory nor the contrary of the predicate 'personal', in so far as these predicates are considered in relation to the subject term, God or Infinite being.

We are still at the fringe of the possibilities latent in the Logic of the Infinite. Some further implications may develop in discussing the concept of negation and its place in Reality. Prof. Raju in his "Thought and Reality" has argued against the view of Hegel and Bradley that negation is an aspect of Reality. I fully endorse his statement that "Negation ought to disappear in Reality" (Page 118), but I feel that the conclusion that he draws from it in the interest of Illusionist Advaita not only does not follow from but even contradicts its premiss. It is true, as Prof. Raju says, that if Reality is Supra-relational and without differences there can be no negation in it; but I do not see how he passes from the proposition, "Negation implies differences and relations", to its simple converse, "Differences and relations imply negation". It seems that he is enabled to do so by combining together the following two premisses both of which he accepts from Bradley:

- 1) Negation appears only because we make selections.
- 2) To think is to make selections and so "in the Absolute thought has no place".

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The second premise is precisely that which I have questioned in this paper. In affirming anything of the Infinite, thought does not "emphasize one aspect in abstraction from the rest", but affirms absolutely. But Prof. Raju may reject the thesis of this paper, in which case I must press against him the charge of contradiction. If what thought affirms is necessarily an abstraction, then Reality, in accepting what we affirm of it must necessarily contain negation. Thus if P implies the absence of Q, then, if Reality is P it is *not* Q and so is partly negative. Prof. Raju's judgement "The real is the positive" would, like all judgements, be "double-edged", i.e. both affirmative and negative; and if it is true, then "negation would belong to Reality itself".

Besides what are we to do with differences and relations, since they are there? They are either contained in the real or not. If as Prof. Raju thinks, they are not, then the Real negates differences and relations and this must lead to the conclusion that negation is ultimate.

Bradley, it seems to me, wavers between the view that negation belongs to Reality and the sceptical conclusion that all judgement is a falsification or misrepresentation and that in the end nothing can be predicated of Reality. There are two considerations which lead him to raise ultimate doubts about our metaphysical knowledge: (1) Judgement implies selection and therefore abstraction, and (2) 'Thought creates a division in the felt whole, and we get the subject and predicate. Thus the original integrity of the whole is lost'. (Raju, *ibid*, p. 119) /

One would have imagined that if certain 'reasons' showed Reality to be an unknowable X of which nothing can be said without falsification then the proper course would be to re-examine the alleged reasons, rather than to accept the sceptical conclusion to which they point. Neither of these reasons is in fact valid and they only appear to be so because we ignore the utterly unique nature of the Infinite and treat it as just one object among other objects.

Judgement, as I have shown, does not imply selection or negation when it affirms a predicate of the Infinite; and if this point has been grasped then it is not difficult to show the falsity of the assumption that 'thought destroys the integrity of the whole'. In thinking of the Infinite, the predicate we affirm of it is not partial but absolute. It is an attribute of the Infinite in Spinoza's sense, and not a fragment separated from the whole. The attribute is the Infinite itself in one of its 'poises' and its affirmation leaves the Infinite free to reveal to thought other poises of itself. The term 'poise

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of the Infinite' is used by Sri Aurobindo to indicate a positive mode of being of the Infinite in which the Infinite is present indivisibly and integrally without being limited to it or any other positive mode of being. The Infinite is to him, the Indeterminable, not in the sense of being a featureless Unknown, but in the sense that in its unlimited freedom it cannot be restricted to any one determination. In a judgement about the Real the subject and the predicate do not fall apart, but remain indivisibly one and thus thought does not lose its hold on the Real, though of course at the level of thought we can hold only the reflection of the Real and not its substantial presence.

So far I have used the terms 'attribute' and 'predicate' interchangeably, but a distinction must be made between the attribute as objectively present in the substance as a poise of its being and the attribute as 'what the mind conceives the substance to be'. The latter is the logical predicate in the judgement. In this distinction there is no suggestion of a Cartesian dualism between a representative idea or mental picture and an extra-mental Reality. In judging Reality to be impersonal the attribute, or better, the impersonal poise of the Infinite is present in the mind by way of an idea, but for that very reason it has an ontological, as distinct from a merely logical status. The idea, it must be remembered, is after all, 'an ideal content referred to Reality'.

Distinguishing between the real attribute or poise of the Infinite and the logical predicate in which the former is ideally contained, we may say that every predicate of the Infinite, in so far as it reveals 'that which expresses eternal and infinite essence' is a Leibnitzian monad. It has no windows; it cannot relate itself directly to any other similar predicate either by way of implication or exclusion. That affirmation does not involve denial in the case of the Infinite, has already been shown. What is now to be shown is that a predicate which reveals a poise of the Infinite is incapable of implying or directly relating itself to any other similar predicate.

The monadic character of the logical predicate follows from the fact that in the judgement, subject and predicate do not fall apart. Thought does not destroy the indivisible character of the whole, since the predicate reveals a poise of the Infinite and not a partial and abstract aspect of it. The predicates of the Infinite, however, may be indirectly related to each other through Reality which is their common subject. Thus if reflection on the nature of the Real leads us to affirm simultaneously that the Real is A and B and C, then A, B and C can get related to each other only indirectly, and

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being predicates of the same Reality. There is no direct logical passage from any one predicate to any of the others. The judgement Reality is A, is a pure affirmation and therefore the predicate A is, *qua* predicate, self-contained. The predicates of Reality are, from the logical point of view, incommensurable.

There is, however, a danger of confusing logical with ontological self-sufficiency, alternative logical predicates with 'alternative forms of the Absolute', of abandoning the search for the ultimate synthesis of all predicates and replacing the integral view of Reality with the doctrine of "the manifoldness of Truth". (The reference here is to Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya. I would like it to be shown that my disagreement with that Master thinker is based on a misunderstanding of his views.) Ontologically the attribute of the Infinite is the very antithesis of monadic existence. Each attribute contains within itself the other attributes and is contained in each of the others. This is so because of Reality itself as an indivisible whole, and not a fragment of it, is present in one attribute, it must be wholly present in it and hence all attributes of Reality are existentially contained in each. From the point of view of the logical predicates, however, we may distinguish between Reality as indivisibly present and Reality as integrally present. The logical predicate contains the Real indivisibly but not integrally, since the Real also accepts other predicates. From the point of view of the predicate itself which is a logical monad, the question of its containing or not containing the integral Reality does not arise.

The distinction between logically incommensurable predicates and a mutually implicative set of ontological attributes has great significance for a philosophy which recognizes spiritual experience as the goal of knowledge. Reality is to be thought about in order that it may be directly known. The idea that thinking is for the sake of thinking—leaving aside the very partial truth it contains—is the grand deception on which secular philosophy in the West has been based and which is responsible for the utterly disreputable state to which it has reduced itself today.

A spiritual experience, as the direct revelation of a poise of the Infinite, is in contrast to the predicate affirmed by thought, not monadic, though in actual fact it may be self-contained. A revelation of God as impersonal is not unrelated to the revelation of God as personal, as the predicate 'impersonal' is to the predicate 'personal',¹ but the one revelation may or may not

¹ I must repeat that the predicates are in the end related to each other not directly, but through their common subject—God.

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contain the other. This explains and reconciles the divergencies of the philosophical systems in India claiming to be based on spiritual experience. Each experience is an authentic revelation of the Infinite, but only in one of its poises.¹ The mistake of the Vedantic Acharyas lies in not recognizing the indeterminable nature of the Infinite. In giving rational expression to their spiritual experience they fall a victim to the half-fledged logic of exclusion and negation, arising from our reflection on finite objects, and in asserting one predicate of the Infinite are instinctively led to deny others.

The self-sufficiency of each predicate, reflecting the indivisible Infinite in one of its poises is repeated in the metaphysical system that grows out of it. A school of Philosophy (Darshana) based on spiritual experience is the result of expounding the complexity contained in any one of the alternative predicates of the Infinite. This is responsible for the illusion to which founders and supporters of the different schools of Vedanta have succumbed that their particular system is internally complete and represents the whole truth. Each system must appear complete if by an initial act of commitment we confine ourselves to it and contemplate it merely from within; and hence we find that rational discussion and polemics do not bring the antagonists any closer together, but leave the more firmly entrenched in their original positions. A truly integral philosophy is one which recognizes that the self-sufficiency of rival systems is deceptive and at best relative, and that no single predicate, in spite of its monarch character, can really set at rest, even at the level of ideas, the *nisus* inherent in the mind's search for truth. The only philosophy which can be said to be integral in the proper sense of the word is a philosophy of complete affirmation, a philosophy which is a negation only of negation and which contains no bias or one-sidedness that requires to be corrected or overcome. To my mind, Sri Aurobindo has simultaneously laid down and fulfilled in his own philosophy the conditions of an integral approach to Truth. Apart from him I know of no thinker whose philosophy is not, partly at least, based on denial.

J. N. CHUBB.

¹ Sri Aurobindo has shown how a spiritual experience may pass beyond the limitations of relative existence and yet not be integral, in the sense of possessing the Infinite fully. According to him it is possible to contact the Infinite at different levels of consciousness in the sphere of manifestation. Of these levels he has revealed a hierarchy, starting from the pure material and reaching to the super-mind. Our point of departure into the Infinite determines the character of the resulting spiritual experience. It is only at the level of the super-mind that the integral Brahman can be realized integrally.

THE MARUTS IN THE VEDA

(Continued from the last issue)

THE Maruts are they

*Who move the mountains, scoff at the sea of waters.*¹

In the Vedic thought, the mountain, the rock, symbolises the physical body, the material frame, inert and hard of structure, in whose caves of the ether regions of subconscience and inconscience lie coiled and asleep energies of various potentialities, rays of the light of consciousness awaiting their liberation. The Maruts, the dynamic powers that have begun their work in man, shake this mountain out of its torpor, strike at the hold of immobility and initiate a general movement of awakening and activity within the body. They bring about a release of the latent powers of knowledge and action. They scoff at the sea of waters. The wide expanse of the ocean signifies the Infinity of Existence on the bosom of whose waters lie manifest the many universes that constitute the creation. These waters are the reservoir of the riches of powers and substances that are essential for the building up of all life. The Maruts, the gods of speedy activity, set these waters into movement, *calanam*, as the commentator says—they do not let them stay in their placid somnolence but provoke them into movement, an ever-widening movement of the waves—and make it possible for the dormant forces and potencies to emerge by themselves or ready to be churned out by the *tapasyā*, the inner discipline of the Initiate.²

¹ य ईङ्क्ष्वयन्ति पर्वतान् तिरः समुद्रमर्णवम् । (RV. I. 19. 7)

² The amount of speculation into which the western scholars have been led by a rik of his kind is indeed amusing. As it is rather typical of the manner in which they draw inferences, construct history and geography and pass verdict on the men and times of the Vedas, on data whose slenderness is matched only by the inadequacy of their own understanding, we reproduce extracts from the copious remarks of Max Muller on this Rik: "Wilson remarks that the influence of the winds upon the sea, alluded to in this and the following verse, indicates more familiarity with the ocean than we should have expected from the traditional inland position of the early Hindus, and it has therefore been supposed by others that, even in passages like our own, *samudra* was meant for the sky, the waters above the firmament. But although there are passages in the Rig Veda where *samudra* must be taken to mean the welkin, this word shows in by far the larger number of passages the clear meaning of ocean."

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They do not merely shake but go further to effectuate their Power more definitively. Listen to Rishi Gotama:

With their ruddy tawny coursers which speed their chariot on, they come to the excellent Waters for glory. Brilliant like gold is the host with thunder Earth they smite with the chariot's wheeling.¹

Luminous alike in their form and their raiment, the Maruts arrive in their carriage sped by their steeds. The horses are described, significantly, to be of two colours. One kind is red-hued; red signifying dynamic energy, intense activity. The other is tawny, the colour which stands for auspiciousness, presaging of happiness. They come to the Waters, the excellent streams of the illumined Consciousness-force in order to rain them on the thirsty soul of the worshipper and thus fulfil a glorious task. They strike the Earth the wheels of their chariot i.e. the pressure of their movement furrows the

"There is one famous passage (VII. 95. 2) which proves that the Vedic poets, who were supposed to have known the upper courses only of the rivers of the Punjab, had followed the greatest and most sacred of their rivers, the Sarasvati, as far as the Indian ocean. It is well known that, as early as the composition of the laws of the Manavas, and possibly as early as the composition of the Sutras on which these metrical laws are based, the river Sarasvati had changed its course, and that the place where that river disappeared underground was called Vinasana, the loss. This Vinasana forms, according to the laws of the Manavas, the western frontier of Madhyadesa, the eastern frontier being formed by the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna....

"It is very curious that while in the later Sanskrit literature the disappearance of the Sarasvati in the desert is a fact familiar to every writer, no mention of it should occur during the whole of the Vedic period, and it is still more curious that in one of the hymns of the Rigveda (VII. 95. 1-2) we should have a distinct statement that the Sarasvati fell into the sea.

"Though it may not be possible to determine by geological evidence the time of the change which modified the southern area of the Punjab and caused the Sarasvati to disappear in the desert, still the fact remains that the loss of the Sarasvati is later than the Vedic age, and that at that time the waters of the Sarasvati reached the sea. Professor Wilson had observed long ago in reference to the rivers of that part of India, that there have been, no doubt, considerable changes here, both in the nomenclature and in the courses of the rivers, and this remark has been fully confirmed by later observations. I believe it can be proved that in the Vedic age the Sarasvati was a river as large as the Sutlej, that it was the last of the rivers of the Punjab, and therefore the iron-gate, or the real frontier against the rest of India. At present the Sarasvati is so small a river that the epithets applied to the Sarasvati in the Veda have become quite inapplicable to it. Etc. Etc."

¹ तेऽरुणेभिर्वरमा पिशङ्गैः शुभे कं यान्ति रथतृभिरश्वैः ।

रक्वमो न चित्रः स्वधीतिवान्पव्या रथस्य जङ्घनन्त भूम ॥

(RV.I.88.2.)

THE MARUTS IN THE VEDA

hard soil of the dense physicality of the being of the Yajamana. The physical body—which is signified by Earth—is inert, immobile and resistant to change. The Mystics of the Veda frequently refer to the action of the gods¹ in beating down its resistance, in kneading it into a sufficient malleability so that it could acquire the necessary plasticity and shape to receive and *hold* the riches of the higher light and power, which is indispensable if the Journey is to proceed smoothly without delay or breakdown. The Maruts, with their double pressure of force and light, work on the body in the very act of their ceaseless movement and make its ploughed soil ready to receive the seeds in the gift of the higher gods.²

*They who set forth, glistening; like wives; swift racers, sons of Rudra, doers of
happy deeds;*

*For the Maruts have made the Heaven and Earth to increase and grow;
heroes, they who grind small, in sacrifices they delight.³*

The Maruts when they are awakened and well-set in their career of movement, are bright with the fresh fervour of energy and the luminous glow of a higher knowledge. They are endearing to the worshipper like a beloved to her husband, wedded to the weal of him who sustains them with his aspiration, prayer and self-offering. They are known for the speed with which they run their course of accomplishment undeterred by any obstacles with which the path may be strewn; holding in themselves the guiding light of knowledge and the executing might of power, these sons of the God of Wrath, Rudra the Terrible, force their way with a divine fury that scorns and puts behind all the opposing forces on the Journey. But, for all their vehemence and impetuosity, the seer adds, they fulfil tasks that are happy, benign in their results—for gods and for man. For, the Rishi declares, the Maruts have formed the Heaven and the Earth in the Yajamana. In the symbolism of the Vedic mystics the Heaven and the Earth stand for the Higher Consciousness of the Mind and the awakened Consciousness in the physical. The Maruts i.e. the gods of the purified Thought-energies⁴ work to

¹ E.g. Indra's working with his Vajra (I.28.1) Maruts (V.52.9) etc.

² Vide Sri T. V. Kapali Sastry *Rig Veda Bhashya* P. 662

³ प्र ये शुम्भन्ते जनयो न सप्तयो यामनृदस्य सूनवः सुदंससः ।
रोदसी हि मरुतश्चक्रिरे वृधे मदन्ति वीरा विदथेषु घृध्वयः ॥
(RV. I.85.1)

⁴ पूतदक्षसः (RV.VIII. 94.7,10)

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bring about the dawn and the settling of the Higher Consciousness on the levels of the Mind on one hand, and on the other, extend and heighten the awakening of Consciousness in the physical being. They do not merely make the formation possible; they feed the Heaven and Earth with their own energisms and make them grow, enlarge their sway in their respective spheres in the expanding being of the worshipper.

And they *grind*, they grind small. These Powers are tireless in their work of breaking down the hard core of resistance to change offered by the materiality of the physical body; the speed and violence for which they are renowned are not enough to achieve this purpose. They have to be incessantly at the task, laboriously bore through the Rock of Inconscience in which the body is rooted and heroes as they are, this too the Maruts accomplish. Charged with the dynamis of Life-Force, illumined by the Light of the Higher Mind, these powers of Aspiration in man are ever at work to eliminate the dogging inertia, immobility and tamasic unwillingness to change. The Sacrifices, the inner Yajna, to which the worshipper invokes the Higher Gods of Knowledge and Bliss to possess his being that is lovingly surrendered to them, hold a perennial attraction for them; because there in the advent of the greater godheads they achieve their own fuller perfection for the ultimate benefit of the Yajamana. Also, it is in the Sacrifices that the Yajamana offers the delectable sap of his own life-experiences and realisations to the Gods and the Maruts love their own share on which they thrive and increase.

*Praise the unslayable host of the Maruts at play amidst radiances. It strengthened as it drank the sap.*¹

Rishi Kanva recalls the happy occasion when the Maruts arrived at a session of his Yajna. Encircled with the halo of their luminous rays, the host of the Maruts displayed themselves playful; nothing was beyond them; they could do things without effort because theirs is the might which knows no diminution. And strong as they were when they arrived, they augmented their strength, they grew in stature as they quaffed the sap, the Soma, essence of the Rishi's life-offering. The Maruts, like other Gods in the Veda, it must be noted, utilise this increase of strength, the exhilaration brought about by the enjoyment of the soulful offering, to the advantage of the offerer.

¹ प शंसा गोष्वघ्न्यं क्रीळं यच्छर्धो मास्तम् । जम्भे रसस्य वावृधे ॥
(RV. I.37.5)

THE MARUTS IN THE VEDA

They grow in and for him. They proceed to effect certain developments of an essential character in his Yajna.

*Drink from the Purifier's vase in season, O Maruts Bountiful, sanctify the rite; for (it) ye are known.*¹

It is not enough for the Yajamana to make the offering of Soma. He must do it at the appropriate moment. Each of the Gods responds and accepts the Drink only when his appropriate time has arrived i.e. when his separate and several requirements by way of equipment in the Sadhana of the mystic are met. Otherwise the effort is barren. The Rishi calls upon the bounteous Maruts to accept his offering at the right time; if in his eagerness he hastens the offering prematurely, it will be useless. They know the proper moment when they can fruitfully receive the Drink which is ready, purified, in the Cup of the being. And by so doing, the Maruts will consecrate the entire rite; they would be uplifting the Yajna to a still higher level of purification where all blemish is eliminated. Themselves purifying energies,² now sustained and nourished by the elixir of Soma-delight, the Maruts spread themselves rapidly and cover the whole Rite in a wide movement of purification and render it sanctified thus entitling it to move further in its Journey to the Home of the Gods. The Maruts are well known for this beneficence and as such does the Rishi entreat them.

Or again,

They with their vigorous strength pushed the well up on high and clove asunder even the rock passing strong.

*The Maruts, bounteous givers, blowing their pipe, in the exhilaration of Soma wrought their glorious deeds.*³

Riding on the crest of an outburst of strength and joy caused by a fresh intake of the delightful Soma the Maruts performed deeds of valour and glory. Happy in the bubbling strength of execution of their purpose, happy with the thought of winning a bounty for their worshipper soon, they were

¹ मरुतः पिबत क्रतुना पोत्राद्यज्ञं पुनीतन । यूयं हि पृथा सुदानवः ॥ (RV. I. 15.2)

² पावकाः, पावकासः

³ ऊर्ध्वं नुद्रेऽवतं त ओजसा दादृहाणं चिद्विभिर्दुर्वि पर्वतम् ।

धमन्तो वाणं मरुतः सुदानवो मदे सोमस्य रण्यानि चक्रिरे ॥ (RV. I. 85.10)

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blowing on their pipes; their joy found a natural expression in notes of music to the accompaniment of which they proceeded to work. And what did they do? They pushed the Waters of the well up from the depths, by their own unaided strength. Deep below in the confines of the subconscious and unconscious regions in the physical body of man there lie the Waters of Consciousness-Energy, the currents of light and power. It is due to the pressure of these elements, however much concealed from view in the somnolence of the apparent unconsciousness which characterises physical matter, that there is in creation an urge to advance, there is an outflowing of more and more consciousness, a purpose observable even in the most mechanical movements in Nature. If the progress up in the scale of life is to be speeded up, if the being of man is to advance towards fulfilment, it is indispensable that these principles are made more and more active, made to inform and govern the movements of life and mind. And it is precisely this that the Maruts do in the seeker in their charge. They—the gods of forward movement incessantly at work in the being of man who is awakened—lift up these streams of Consciousness-Energy to the level of the Prana and then to that of Mind. That is to say, the activities of the life-force and the thought-force are more and more charged with the light and power of this Secret Principle. The well is lifted up from its nether base and its pristine Waters rendered available to the soul of the Yajamana on his arduous journey. No more for him is the acute thirst of want; the denying factors of ignorance, incapacity and limitation are progressively replaced by an increasing knowledge, power and freedom. But it is not easy to effect the change. There is the hard Rock of the dense layers of physical matter and unconsciousness which obstruct the flow of the Waters upward. No human will and endeavour could break through this barrier unaided. The Maruts dynamite this solid Rock and clear the way for the surge of the leavening Waters.

Powerful by themselves, the Maruts are led in battle by One yet more powerful. The host of the Maruts has Indra at its head, *indrajyēsthā marudganaḥ*.¹ The Maruts are described as the brothers of Indra,² as his playmates,³ as his army.⁴ They pool their strengths at the disposal of Indra.

¹ RV. I. 23.8

² इन्द्र . . . भ्रातरो मरुतस्तव (RV. I. 170.2)

³ इन्द्रस्य वै मरुतः क्रीडिनः (Kaushitaki Br. 5.5. Gopatha 1.23)

⁴ इन्द्रस्य वै मरुतः (" " 5.4.5)

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in his fight with the Arch-Enemy Vritra¹ who obstructs the flow of the Waters. They come in their legions and support and follow him in his expedition to find and release the Ray-Cows imprisoned in the dark caves of the Captors.

Read in the symbology of the Vedic mystics these descriptions not only stand naturally and perfectly explained but point to a profounder truth in the inner life of man and the universe. The Maruts are, as we have seen, the aspiring Thought-Forces energised by the dynamism of purified life-energy. They are constantly striving to reach and spread themselves on the higher and yet higher reaches of mind till they arrive at the levels of the Pure Mind whose Lord is Indra. It is then they are said to be born again.² "The Maruts take our animal consciousness made up of the impulses of the nervous mentality, possess these impulses with their illuminations and drive them up the hill of being towards the world of Swar and the truths of Indra." (Sri Aurobindo). Already purified and subtilised sufficiently enough to gain entrance into this region of Swar, they find a natural release, a happy culmination, into the hands of the Lord of the luminous heavens of the Divine Mind. They find in him their archetype, the One in whose image they have been getting shaped; him they accept and follow as their First on the path of the Sacrifice-Journey. Naturally, if they gain a new status and stamp of a still Higher Consciousness by their following and being accepted by Indra, this Power of the Divine Mind also gains an increasing strength and mobility by their association and is thereby enabled to further the Manifestation of the Higher Consciousness reigning above the triple world of Ignorance. On the harmony of this mutually enriching association and cooperation between the Maruts and Indra depends the progress³ of the inner Yajna beyond the frontiers of the human mind. Indeed there are passages in the Rig Veda which describe the disharmony, even a conflict at times between the gods of the thought-forces and the God of the Divine Mind in the being of the worshipper and the unhappy consequences that ensue. But that is a subject in

¹ मरुता ह वै क्रीडिनो वृत्रं हनिष्यन्तमिन्द्रं
आगतं तमभितः परिचिक्रीडुर्मह्यन्तः । (Shatapatha Br. 2.5.3.20)

² आदह स्वधामनु पुनर्गर्भत्वमेनिरे दधाना नाम यज्ञियम्

And again after their self-law they have come to embryonic birth holding the sacrificial name. (RV. I.6.4.) Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

³ मरुत्वान् नो भवत्विन्द्र ऊती, May Indra become associated with the Maruts for our thriving (Refrain in I. 100) Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

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itself and cannot be dealt with adequately within the limits we have set for ourselves in this paper. It is enough for our purpose to note that if the Maruts, the Thought-powers attempt to force their advance direct to their goal, bypassing and ignoring the Power of the Divine Intelligence in manifestation, that is to say, if the seeker on the Path to Immortality endeavours to shoot direct by sheer thought-force without a prior and proper fulfilment in the Truth of the Pure Mind, then there is an opposition from the Universal Power presiding over the "realm of pure intelligence through which the ascending soul passes into the divine Truth."¹ and a consequent disharmony and arrest of progress.

The proper role of the Maruts is to so activate the being of man generally and specially the thought-being supported by *prāṇa*, to so subject he movements of mind and subtilised life to a ceaseless pressure of aspiration, rectification, purification, that they all, gradually, orient themselves and converge towards the highest heights of the mental skies where Indra, the Lord of Swar, is as it were, waiting for the aspiring soul. There the Maruts have to deliver their charge and line up themselves behind the Premier One. Thus does Indra give his injunction to the Maruts:

"Giving the energy of your breath to their thoughts of varied light, become in them impellers to the knowledge of my truths. Whensoever the doer becomes active for the work and the intelligence of the thinker creates us in him, O Maruts, move surely towards that illumined seer."²

It is he, the Lord of Thoughts, *ṛṣṣabho matinām*, who is to take up the processed thought-movements and give them their fulfilling completeness; confirm them in the status proper to his own realm of divine illumination and once they are thus ready, to proceed to win for man the undying Light of the Sun of Truth.

In spite of his unequalled prowess Indra does not act alone. He is joined by the Maruts who have arrived, he is increased in his strength by the strength of their legions. By their instrumentation he effects and extends his sway over the domain of men. Thus is Indra entreated by the Rishi to accept the sacrifice, accept the aid of the toiling Maruts, so that by them increased he can affirm himself (in the being of the Rishi) with a fuller

¹ Sri Aurobindo.

² मन्मानि चित्रा अपिवातयन्त एषां भूत नवेदा म ऋतानाम् ॥

आ यद् दुवस्याद् दुवसे न कारुस्माञ्चक्रे मान्यस्य मेधा ।

ओ षु वर्त मरुतो विप्र मच्छ (RV. I. 165.13-14) Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

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pervasiveness and by him protected they can fulfil themselves, their brilliances and their mights, *in the ordered method of Truth, ṛtuthā*.

*Thou by whom the movements of the mind grow conscient and brilliant in our mornings through the bright power of the continuous Dawns, O Bull of the herd, establish by the Maruts inspired knowledge in us, —by them in their energy thou energetic, steadfast, a giver of might. Do thou, O Indra, protect the Powers in their increased might; put away thy wrath against the Maruts, by them in thy forcefulness upheld, who have right preceptions. May we find the the strong impulsion that shall break swiftly through.”*¹

To quote the luminous commentary of Sri Aurobindo on these Riks:

“The Maruts represent the progressive illumination of human mentality, until from the first obscure movements of mind which only just emerge out of the darkness of the subconscious, they are transformed into an image of the luminous consciousness of which Indra is the Purusha, the representative Being. Obscure, they become conscient; twilit, half-lit or turned into misleading reflections, they surmount these deficiencies and put on the divine brilliance. This great evolution is effected in Time gradually, in the mornings of the human spirit, by the unbroken succession of the Dawns. For Dawn in the Veda is the goddess symbolic of new openings of divine illumination on man’s physical consciousness. She alternates with her sister Night; but that darkness itself is a mother of light and always Dawn comes to reveal what the black-browed Mother has prepared. Here, however, the seer seems to speak of continuous dawns, not broken by these intervals of apparent rest and obscurity. By the brilliant force of that continuity of successive illuminations the mentality of man ascends swiftly into fullest light. But always the force which has governed and made possible the transformation, is the puissance of Indra. It is that supreme Intelligence which through the Dawns, through the Maruts, has been pouring itself into the human being. Indra is the Bull of the radiant herd, the Master of the thought-energies, the Lord of the luminous dawns.

Now also let Indra use the Maruts as his instruments for the illumination.

¹ येन मानासश्चितयन्त उक्ता व्युष्टिषु शवसा शश्वतीनाम् ।

स नो मरुद्भिर्वृषभ श्रवो धा उग्र उग्रेभिः स्थविरः सहोदाः ॥

त्वं पाहीन्द्र सहीयसो नृन्भवा मरुद्भिरवयातहेळाः ।

सुप्रकेतेभिः सासहिर्दधानो विद्यामेषं वृजनं जीरदानुम् ॥

(RV. I. 171.5-6) Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

By them let him establish the supramental knowledge of the seer. By their energy his energy will be supported in the human nature and he will give that nature his divine firmness, his divine force, so that it may not stumble under the shock or fail to contain the vaster play of puissant activities too great for our ordinary capacity.

The Maruts, thus reinforced in strength, will always need the guidance and protection of the superior Power. They are the Purushas of the separate thought-energies, Indra the one Purusha of all thought-energy. In him they find their fullness and their harmony. Let there then be no longer strife and disagreement between this whole and these parts. The Maruts, accepting Indra, will receive from him the right perception of the things that have to be known. They will not be misled by the brilliance of a partial light or carried too far by the absorption of a limited energy. They will be able to sustain the action of Indra as he puts forth his force against all that may yet stand between the soul and its consummation.

So in the harmony of these divine Powers and their aspirations may humanity find that impulsion which shall be strong enough to break through the myriad oppositions of this world and, in the individual with his composite personality or in the race, pass rapidly on towards the goal so constantly glimpsed but so distant even to him who seems to himself almost to have attained."

The Maruts are also associated with another major God of the Vedas, Agni. In many of the Riks Agni is called upon to come to the Sacrifice along with the host of the Maruts and in some Agni is even described as bringing the Maruts to birth. Theirs is the glory of Fire, declares Vishwamitra. We do not of course take serious notice of the puerile explanation of the matter by western scholars whose position is so admirably summed up by Wilson in one sentence: "(The association) is an obvious metaphor expressing the action of wind upon fire." It is clear from our study thus far of the inner, the psychological character of the Maruts, that this relation is only natural. For, Agni the first of the Gods to be born in the mortals, is in his first manifestation the flaming force of aspiration and self-effectuating seeing will. In his working, *vrata*, as the being in its totality gets more and more warmed up and heated with a consuming passion for the eradication from oneself of the triple noose of the lower self and for a rapid transcendence into a life governed and growing in the Higher Truth and its Law, there are

¹ अग्निश्रियो मरुतः (RV. III. 24.5)

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awakened and released into action the powers of might and speed charged with a soaring aspiration who breaking forth from the domain of nervous vitality lead up to the regions of Thought and carry everything before them in their wide and onward movement. Thus describes Rishi Parashara:

*When a flame of energy came to this King of men for impelling force, when in their meeting Heaven was cast in him like a pure seed, the Fire gave birth to a host, young and faultless and perfect in thought and sped it on its way.*¹

Agni is the ruling Deity of Earth. Whether externally as the elemental fire, the principle of heat and light which keeps life going or on the esoteric side as the divine Flame which manifests in the heart of creatures and urges them forward, Agni is the Lord who leads man, the son of earth. Like a king to his subjects, he tends to the need of them in whom he is awakened, intercedes on their behalf with the other Gods, carries their offerings to the destination. He forms the bridge for man to ascend from Earth to Heaven and Beyond. When this Agni, recalls the seer, was activated by a burst of energy his pace quickened impelled by the increasing drive within, and he hastened towards the heights of the Heaven of the Pure Mind carrying with him the best in the worshipper. There arrived, Agni receives (for man) the first touch, the pregnant touch of that Higher Consciousness and immediately, as a direct consequence of this inflow of the pure and illumined mental substance, he is able to charge and set afire the entire Thought-region in man. The multitude of thought-forces are uplifted and galvanised into their churning and striving movement. The host of the Maruts is born. Drawing their power and mobility from the purified, inexhaustible life-energies at their base, they are young and fresh; open and aspiring to the flow of the currents of the pure Intelligence above, they are right-thoughted and right-functioning, above the bounds of ignorance and error in which the human mind normally moves. Agni not only gives the generating touch but gives also a push and velocity which speed them on their career as fire-tongued increasers of Truth.²

The Path of the Maruts is trailed with a blaze of light. The Maruts are

¹ आ यदिषे नृपतिं तेज आनट् शुचिं रेतो निषिक्तं द्यौरभीके ।

अग्निः शर्धमनवद्यं युवानं स्वाध्यं जनयत्सूदयच्च ॥

(RV. I. 71.8) Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

² अग्निजिह्वा ऋतावृधः (RV. I. 44.14)

Vide page. 47 Advent Nov. 1954.

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spoken of as harbingers of light and that is only proper for these thought-energies are powers that seek and make for higher knowledge. As we have seen, they are always on the move for attaining the consciousness of the higher and higher summits of the Mind and they arrive at their full maturity when they are accepted on the levels of luminous mentality and they grow into the status of the Consciousness native to that plane. Thus they are always instinct with a charge of Knowledge growing into higher Knowledge. And knowledge, as we know, is symbolised in the Veda by the living figure of light. It is this Light of Knowledge that follows in their wake, *radiance streams along their paths*,¹ says the Rishi.

*After the Maruts followed close, of its own accord, the splendour of Heaven*²...

The Maruts do not have to make any special effort to bring the Light; the splendour of the Heavens of illumined mental consciousness follows them naturally, of its own accord, because they have grown into it and are now become so many centres of manifestation or emanations of that Consciousness whose form is Light.

Or,

• *Conceal the concealed darkness; repel every devourer. Create the Light for which we long*.³

It is within the experience of every seeker of the mystic Path that there is somewhere in his own being a core of obscurity, a part that does not follow and keep pace with others in their growth towards light, knowledge and freedom. It is given to the obstinate rule of inertia, shot through and through with opaque masses of unconsciousness and it not only opposes all infiltration of light in its own region, but casts its shadow on the rest of the being also. This is the darkness concealed to the outer view, lying embedded in the denser layers of the physical being. The Rishi, engaged in the Yajna of self-transcendence, doubtless is confronted with the challenge of this Darkness and prays to the dynamic Maruts to remove it from view, to eliminate it from the scene of action.

¹ वत्मानि एषां अनुरीयते घृतम् । (RV. I. 85.3)

² अन्वेनाँ अह मरुतो भानुर त्मना दिवः (RV. V. 52.6)

³ गूह्यत गुह्यं तमो वि यात विश्वमत्रिणम् । ज्योतिष्कर्ता यदुष्मसि ॥ (RV. I. 86.10)

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This done, there remains another difficulty. There are plenty of malevolent elements in Nature opposed to the progress of man—forces and beings operating on the physical as well as the supra-physical levels who try to *eat up* what man has achieved in his endeavour. In his unguarded movements they lure him into movements of forgetfulness or sloth, or wrong-occupation, gain entry in his atmosphere and rob him of the spiritual wealth he has so far won. These are the Dasyus, the Rakshasas who infest the route of the Traveller, who when they do not find sufficient opening in his armour for surreptitious entrance, do not hesitate to launch a frontal attack on his person at some stage or another. The Maruts with their piercing sights and luminous strengths can be safely trusted to spot and deal with them. This is the second prayer of the Rishi.

And as a result of the successful accomplishment of the first two, the third and the most important. The clogging darkness has been removed; the eager enemy is kept at bay; the way is cleared for a decisive and consummating realisation: the advent and establishment of the Light, the Supreme Light for which the Rishi and his high-souled companions have been longing. The Maruts are the holders of the Universal Light¹ and to them the Rishi prays to achieve this victory for him, to set in him this Light which once for all puts an end to the era of false lights and twilights and ensures an undeviating journey from knowledge to greater knowledge, from truth to higher truth.²

And finally, the Maruts are the Healers.

O Maruts, generous in gifts, bring us the medicaments that belong to your company.

*Ye coursers who are friends to us.*³

¹ मरुत्सु विश्वभानुषु (RV. IV. 1.3)

² It is interesting to note that even Sayana has felt constrained to give the spiritual import of the Rik in his commentary, albeit as an alternative;

यद्वा गुह्यं गुह्यायां शरीरान्तर्गतगुहारुपहृदयेभवं तमोभावरुपाज्ञानं दूहत विनाशयत ।
अत्रिणं पुरुषार्थस्यात्तारं कामक्रोधादिकं सर्वं विनिर्गमयत । यत्तज्ज्योतिः परतत्त्वसाक्षा-
त्काररूपं ज्ञानं कामयामहे प्राणापानादिपञ्चवृत्तिरूपा हे मरुतः तत्कर्तुं कुरुत ।

³ मरुतो मारुतस्य न आ भेषजस्य वहता सुदानवः सुदानवः

यूयं सखायः सप्तयः ॥ (RV. VIII. 20.23)

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As sons of Rudra, the Physician of physicians,¹ the Maruts also have the healing touch, the knowledge of the Balm that soothes. They are ever on the move and they know and can draw upon the healing powers wherever they are—in the rivers of life, in the ocean of Consciousness-Energy or in the hilly tracts of the physical substance.

*Carry it to our bodies, ye who see all; bless us graciously therewith.
End the malady, O Maruts; make whole again the afflicted (frame) of the
sick one.²*

The Maruts know all the medicines and where they are to be found, says the Rishi and prays that they may bring them for the benefit not to himself alone, but to the community of seekers who are engaged in the Sacrifice. Whether as a result of overstrain or misdirected effort or hostile attacks from outside or from the *sin* of actions in disharmony with the call of the Truth to which he has centrally dedicated himself, the many-tiered being of the seeker is afflicted by malady; it cannot function in its fullness. And as long as this imperfection and incapacity is allowed to continue, it is not possible to advance far on the Journey. The Maruts have the knowledge of the means wherewith to remove the ailment and the capacity to restore the health of the worshipper to a condition perfect in its all round completeness, *make whole, īṣkarta*. Indeed, the Maruts are well-known for their pure, most wholesome and felicitous medicines from the time of Manu, the First Man.³

Be it noted that there are not the illnesses of the physical body alone. There are the ills of the mind, the afflictions of the life-being, the sicknesses of the soul. Those whose living is not confined to the normal life of the physical senses alone, know how real the effects of these maladies are.

¹ भिषक्तमम् भिषजाम् (RV. II. 33.4)

सहस्रं ते भेषजा, thousand medicines of Rudra (RV. VII. 46.3)

हस्ते बिभ्रत् भेषजा, carrying medicines in hand (RV. I. 114.5)

क्व स्व ते रुद्र मृळवाकुर्हस्तो य अस्ति भेषजो जलाषः । Where, Oh Rudra, is thy joy-dispensing hand, the hand that healeth and delighteth! (RV. II. 33.7)

² विश्वं पश्यन्तो विभृथा तनूष्वा तेना नो अधि वोचत ।

क्षमा रपो मरुत आतुरस्य न इष्कर्ता विहुतं पुनः ॥ (RV. VIII. 20.26)

³ या वो भेषजा मरुतः शुचीनि या शन्तमा वृषणो या मयोभू ।

यानि मनुर्वृणीता पिता नः (RV. II. 33.13)

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Indeed, for the seekers of the Spirit, for those whose lives are lived more and more on the subtler, the psychological and the yet deeper levels of being, the ills of want and limitation, ignorance and obscurity in the subtler bodies of life, mind and *antahkarana*, the emotional, and what is more the disharmonies between the different parts of being e.g. the outer and inner, the higher and lower, are much more galling and exasperating than the diseases of the body. The Maruts carry the medicine which acts on all these and they pour it in torrents¹ on him in whom they are active. Their purified energies of Life-force, the illuminations of the higher Light with which their Thought-content is charged, the sweetnesses which they eternally carry in their person² and the currents of Bliss which are inalienable from the streams of Waters they set release with the help of Indra, eliminate the defects of weakness, incapacity and incompleteness, disintegrate the elements of ignorance, falsehood and error and lift the many-sided-being of the Yajamana out of the circle of struggle and suffering into the larger spaces of Peace and Happiness where corners are rounded, gaps are filled and harmony established in spontaneous movements of growth into Wholeness.

Such, then, was the character and import of the Maruts to the Vedic initiate whatever they may have meant to the un-instructed. Such also is their significance—and value to us, if we will—if, in our study of the hymns, we do not stop short with their external physiognomy and activities, but look deeper and awaken to the truth of their role in the life of every seeker of the Ideal of Immortality.

M. P. PANDIT

¹ वृष्ट्वी . . . भेषजम् . . . मरुतः (RV.V.53.14)

² मादयिष्णवः (Atharva Veda. VII. 77.3)

THE LIFE DIVINE—*Synopsis*

(Continued)

CHAPTER XVII

THE DIVINE SOUL

BY the conception of Supermind we begin to grasp intellectually what the Divine, and how out of That the world has come. The next question is how we must change and to what become, in order to arrive at the Divine in our nature, life and relation with others.

This ascent must begin with the individual, and above all the recovery of the divine soul in him. But we have to see the soul first in its original luminosity before it descended and obscured itself in the inconscience of the material world.

The soul, before its descent into the ignorance, lived in the world of its own infinite being. It could enjoy difference from God and at the same time unity with Him. And it could commune intimately with other souls, enjoying difference and unity with them.

Such a soul would be a pure and unlimited self-existence in being; free play of immortal life; a pure and unlimited consciousness poised on luminous tranquillity; and a pure and inalienable delight in its eternal self-experience.

Its consciousness would be open to the infinite truth of the Absolute as a constant presence, and to all things as the manifestation of That. This constant presence would be the very foundation of its being both in unity and the differentiation.

Such a divine soul would live in the inseparable poles of the Absolute in the One and the Many simultaneously. Our divided being chooses one or the other, but the unitarian consciousness of the divine soul would be aware of the infinite concentration, as well as the self-extension and differentiation, of the One in its unexpressed state and in its active play.

It would be aware of the Many, drawing down to themselves the Centres and of the Many ever mounting up to the One, which is their source and culmination. This would be the true dynamic comprehension of Oneness.

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both in the Divine Reality and in the Creativity. The divine soul would always be conscious of the oneness concentrated in the essence of its being, as well as manifested in variation in the illimitable extension of being.

In this cosmic extension the divine soul would be aware of the three grades of the supramental existence, as the triune and inseparable reality of the Divine Nature. First, all things will be perceived as the Self, its own self and the one self of all. Second, each soul-form will have its own being in the One, its own relation with other existences, but all dependent on the One. Third, it will sense all individual existences as the individual Divine, each of which is an in-dwelling centre of the One.

These are the three aspects of one Existence, known to the ancient knowledge as firstly, the Self in us becoming all existences, which is the basis of our oneness with all; secondly, the experience of all existences in the all-embracing Self, which is the basis of our oneness amidst difference; and thirdly, the experience of the Self in all existences, which is the basis of our individuality amidst the universal existence. All this is the one triune reality to the realised soul.

Nor would the soul, living in the consciousness of the individual Divine, lose any of its other poises; its relation with God, its supreme Self, and its relation with its other selves in other forms. It will thus have the delight of its experience in its own self; it will have the delight of all its experience of relation with others as a communion with other selves; and it will have the delight of its experiences of its other selves as if they were its own—as indeed they are.

The same experience of the interplay of the different notes of one infinite harmony will apply to the relation of the soul's being, knowledge, will in respect to the being, knowledge, will of other souls.

The divine soul's relation with God, its supreme being, will have this sense of the oneness of the transcendent and universal Divine with its own being. Its relation of knowledge will be a consciousness of the play of the divine omniscience; its relations of will that of the divine omnipresence; and its relations of love and delight that of the divine ecstasy. All its becomings will be formations of divine being in its oneness; while at the same time it will enjoy the sense of difference and of separation from unity. This will be but another form of unity, such as is experienced in the rapture of the God-lover in the clasp of the Divine.

The divine soul can only fully emerge in the living material and mental world, when Supermind has created the forces, faculties and functionings

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proper to the supramental being. These factors touch on the psychological conditions of the divine life which are to be considered later (in Part II). At present the metaphysical framework, the essential nature and principles of the divinisation of life are being considered.

CHAPTER XVIII

MIND AND SUPERMIND

The conception of the divine soul is that which the human soul has manifest in his physical and mental life. The task now is to see the connection between our present perverse mentality, with its imperfect life, and that which belongs to the pure Divine Nature. In other words, we have to study the connection of the four great divine terms—supreme infinite being, conscious-force and self-delight, (which constitute the Divine Nature) and their active Power or Supermind—with the other three terms familiar to our terrestrial existence—mind, life and the material body.

Without this knowledge of the connecting links between the higher and the lower Nature, we cannot be convinced of the possible perfection and transformation of humanity and the earth life.

All that we call undivine are really part of the working of the divine Real-Idea (or Supermind). Mind, body and life are in fact subordinating activities of the Truth-Consciousness, and must be capable of divinity.

The first step—the inner realisation or soul-consciousness—has been attained by some upon earth. The further steps—the external transformation of mind, life and body—have yet to be established in the world. This touches on the problems we have now to consider: the supreme sources of Mind, Life and Body; and the steps by which their integral divine manifestation may be effected in the physical world.

What man has glimpsed in the past of the higher Reality and Perfect Being and built up as his Ideal and goal of endeavour, is that which exists in Divine Knowledge. It is separated from him, because it has not yet been realised in man's own being, as an actuality in the earth nature.

Mind is man's present instrument of knowledge, and it is incomplete. Mind in fact is an inferior function of a Truth-conscious Reality which cannot yet fully grasp. The true function of Mind, as the instrument of Divine Power, is to translate the infinity into the terms of the finite; it is a consciousness that cuts out forms from the indivisible Whole.

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All Mind's working is conditioned by this inherent dividing function. What it pieces together into a totality are but parts of a greater Whole; for Mind in its nature cannot possess the infinite. This faculty belongs to the Power beyond mind.

Mind, which is the centre of what we now see as the Ignorance, is the present highest instrument of the lower Nature. We have to see also that the Ignorance itself is a purposeful and necessary phase of the evolution. Although there is no ignorance in the Divine Nature itself, yet in the Divine creative Power a subordinate process of delimitation appears. This is what can be called the divine mind (or Overmind), which operates directly through what has been previously noted as the apprehending movement of Supermind.

Through the apprehending Consciousness the creative Power witnesses objectively that which is created from, and is of, Him. This is the original division between the Creation and the Divine Power, and issues from one Existence and being.

The last act of Creation takes place when the original all-pervading Spirit—diffuse and infinitely extensive—has become the concentrated centres or soul-forms inhabiting every particle of Creation. This is the real beginning of the evolution or upward ascent; but we have to note that no real division has been established, since the divine Spirit exists in all things however infinitesimal. Also each soul is identical with the Supreme in being, though each is different in its relation, its range of movement, and viewpoint.

We have already seen that there is no real limitation in the divine soul itself; but in the evolution the soul uses mind as a subordinate action of the faculty infinite knowledge. Mind itself is a faculty—what can be called a self-ignoring—of Supermind which yet governs Mind behind the veil. In this way Mind was created, self-absorbed, for its work in the Ignorance.

Science, as a function of man's mind, continually divides or pieces together knowledge without reaching any finality or completeness. Man has reduced the universe to infinitesimal particles; and by attempting to go beyond this infinite divisibility (by splitting the atom of matter) he has only proved the inherent indivisibility of the universe, by exposing the original Energy which is the creative Power it contains. Thus is indivisibility shown to be the truth of Creation.

By the light of a higher Knowledge man realises that division itself is a subordinate factor. Behind and upholding all is the divine creative Power of Supermind, which at the same time has entered into all things. Man's present

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limitation has resulted from the fall or descent of the individual soul into the sub-soil of the Ignorance, where the soul's vision of indivisibility has become obscured by the condition of division.

That which the mind ordinarily sees as fixed and static, science has already shown to be an ever-changing flux, not only in the moment but through vast stretches of time. The universe is in fact a vast harmony, a cosmos which the mind cannot encompass; for it is a harmony that belongs to the Real-Idea of the Truth-Consciousness. Mind, at present self-involved, has to widen into that higher Light of Consciousness.

The ignorance or unknowing is increased for man because mind has its function through bodily instruments, and the mind is thereby restricted. The physical mind is merely our surface mind; below is the subconscious and behind is the subliminal mind, connected with the universal mind. But the individual is normally cut off from this latter.

Above the physical mind is the mind of the vital being, which brings man the first intimation of a soul; though not yet the pure soul but the limited individualised soul which regards everything from its own standpoint and is yet subject to mind's ignorance.

Beyond the vital mind is the clearer reflective mind of the mental being. It is this that sees the whole world in terms of mind, and in the past has been mistaken for the pure spirit. This is because it is much freer and less restricted than the physical and vital minds; but it is yet not free of the original error of mind which is still fixed to its ego-centre.

There is thus a veil between the individualised mind and a free luminous mentality beyond it. Only when the veil is pierced, and the mind becomes passive and receptive to the supramental Light, can the individual mind lose its rigidly separate standpoint and recover the truth of things. We can then see the purpose of the divided existence, to be an absorbed and self-contained action in the world, and yet the instrument of the Truth-consciousness.

We hence come to realise that the Ignorance springs merely from the mind separated in knowledge from its source of knowledge, and this gives the mistaken appearance of opposition and conflict where indeed there is a harmonious, Divine-directed play. From this fundamental error all other errors have sprung.

It is for the individual therefore to open himself to the Truth-consciousness, so that Mind itself can become the instrument of Light in the world, instead of being involved in its own obscurity.

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CHAPTER XIX

LIFE

A new vista of world-evolution is now opening up to us, a vista that science is gradually substantiating.

As we have discovered Matter to be a substance-form of Force, so we shall find that material Force is only energy-form of Mind, a subconscious operation of Will.

It would seem therefore from the evolutionary point of view that a subconscious Mind has brought the material world into being. But Mind has no independent existence apart from Supermind. Supermind existed from the beginning in the very seed of all things. Hence instead of disorder; a chance movement Evolution is an ordered and right relation which is directed, though as yet relatively, towards a supreme end.

Thus evolution is a progressive emergence: first of Life involved in Matter; second of a mentally conscious life and intelligence, which is seen even at the very root of Life; and finally of Supermind which is the true source and supreme basis of this material universe. The evolution of this triple world of mind, life and matter is not yet complete. There is the creator, divine principle that has yet to emerge.

Life manifests itself on earth as a dynamic movement of the one cosmic energy, whose process is to build, energise and maintain forms by means of disintegration and renewal of their substance. Death or disintegration thus a process of life.

The life-principle exists throughout creation, latent in the physical process but emerging into the familiar active principle in the plant and animal nature, and becoming the mentalised vitality in man. Life obviously changes its mode of operation at each level of the evolution.

Motion, breathing and eating are familiar processes of life, but they are not Life itself. Life can, and does, exist independently of the means of its operations. Life is everywhere; only its forms and organisations differ. Thus the physical response to stimulus, seen in plant and animal alike, is but the outward sign of life.

Life itself is a form of energy, whether active or latent; and it is part of the one World-Force, of which mind-energy and material energy are other manifestation. Thus we find that the dynamic energy of life in the body can be suspended, and yet the life-force is still present. In trance for example, the body comes back to normal life. Yet even when the Force of the life-action has become inert, as in the state of death, Life is still busy,

but the process has changed. The disintegration of substance is then its chief concern, rather than the process of building up and maintenance.

Life has always inherent in it the mental consciousness and nervous vitality; and this fact becomes more recognisable to us—in the form of response to stimuli—when we encounter it in the more complex forms of life. We are reluctant to recognise it in the chemical atom or mineral, which are further removed from our own mode of consciousness.

In the plant the mental consciousness inherent in Life is as yet involved, although the rudiments of nervous vitality are discernible. All this points to a subconscious mentality which has a direct link with man's own deeper subconscious levels. We might say that the seed or rudiment of a subconscious sense-mind exists also in the apparently inert metal.

The real difference between the conscious and the subconscious lies in the latter's exclusiveness and concentration in its work. Because of this shut-in exclusiveness, all degrees of subconsciousness show a division or separation in their action from the superconscious source of their action and knowledge. In man this exclusiveness has become a shut-in self-consciousness; but even in the atom we can see that the forces of attraction and repulsion are an involved subconscient expression, an elemental form of liking and disliking. This phenomenon is not so surprising when we remember that the Force that builds up and organises atoms of matter is the same Force that is contained compressed in the atom itself, and belongs to the Divine creative Power.

It is clear that what emerges as active Life is already present in so-called inanimate matter. Likewise the rudiments of sensation that belong to Mind are already present in sub-mental Life and Matter. We can only see that the original compressed seeds of Creation issued from, or came about as a result of, an involved or graded descent of the higher into the lower grades of substance.

Life in the evolution has passed (or is passing) through three stages: the vibration wholly involved in Matter; the submental response; and the conscious mentality. Life itself, the operation of Conscious-Force, is also the intermediate term and link between Matter and Mind. In man the great channel of interchange is achieved through the pulsating nerve-energy which carries sensation to mind and carries back motive will to matter. This is the recognisable form that life-energy has taken in the animal being; but the same energy is present in varying degrees of organisation in all forms down to the very atom.

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CHAPTER XX

DEATH, DESIRE AND INCAPACITY

We have now to consider in more detail the condition of the present stage of Life. As we have seen, the fundamental principle of Life is the interchange of energy. Behind and inherent in Life is the universal Force that creates, energises, maintains and modifies (by dissolving and reconstructing) substantial forms.

Matter is the lower basis of the terrestrial evolution, with the atom as its central starting-point. The atom is in fact a highly compressed centre of the original creative Force. We can say therefore that just as the living body and thinking mind have evolved out of their latent principles, so Supermind will be delivered out of its imprisonment in mind. Here we have to note that both Life and Mind transformed (being instruments of the divine Power) would still be the intermediate vehicle of the exchange of energy, but in a freer and wider capacity.

Above the Divine creative Power is the pure Divine Nature which is centralised also in that divine Power of Supermind. By this relation Supermind, as the instrumental Power, has created and extended itself into worlds of substance and energy-forms, the very nature of which has originally issued from the Divine Nature itself. Thus has Life originated from the Divine Consciousness-Force to become the dynamic instrument of Supermind's creative Will.

Mind is the individualising agent (actively upholding the individual persistence or will-to-live); while Life is the energising agent that bears the original Conscious-Force through the Divine Power. Just as the evolutionary progression must open Mind to its divine Origin, Supermind, so Life has to become the consciously vibrant energy of that Conscious-Force which operates, though veiledly, in and behind it.

Thus Life is not at present aware of the wherefore of its operations. This is because it is as yet subservient to the dividing operation of mind which is itself shut off from its divine Source. The descent of the individual soul, as the nucleus of the evolutionary ascent, and its initial plunge into the obscurity, was the original cause of this separation. The subsequent steps of the soul's upward growth have been the gradual unfolding of the seeds of Consciousness out of the obscurity. The goal of the individualised life is thus to realise its inherent Divine Power and become conscious and ever more open to its true Divine Source.

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But the individualised being is as yet a divided consciousness, and is also subject to the present incomplete nature of cosmic Life, with its triple limitation of Death, Desire, and Incapacity. We have to see how this double limitation can be overcome and transformed.

Death exists because Life demands the renewal of individual forms in accordance with its law of interchange; and since the individual form has not yet the sufficient power or capacity to effect this interchange indefinitely, it sooner or later has to give up that individualised form. This is the present operation of Life as a disintegrating force, which can only be overcome when the individual himself establishes a balance with Life, in which the individual gives to Life as well as takes from Life. This means that the individual has to widen into his universal nature.

The aim of the individual embodied life is to seek infinite experience on a finite basis; and under the present limited condition of Life this can be done only by dissolving the old forms and taking on new ones. Thus has the individual soul moved through successive lives and accumulated experience and knowledge. Death has thus been necessary because change of form has been the only immortality open to the finite living being aspiring for change of experience.

The real sting of Death lies in this sense of being devoured, broken up, destroyed or forced away. But mutual devouring belongs to an initial law of Life in Matter, where the two opposite impulses of infinite division and infinite aggregation have each to be satisfied, but not yet integrated.

We see also that the whole spring of Desire stems from the urge of the finite individual to maintain and increase himself, and ultimately to possess the infinite. This self-enlargement can only come about in the present state of the physical world by devouring others; and this has led to the law of life feeding on life, where the devourer becomes in turn the devoured.

This vital hunger in the subconscious life has turned into a craving Desire in the mentalised life, and the straining of Will in the thinking life. Desire is a stage in the evolution, and its original impulse has to be fully recognised before it can be transformed.

It is clear that the individual has to progress from the life of mutual devouring to that of increasing self-sacrifice through interchange. Thus will the law of Hunger, Division and Death become transformed into the law of Love, Unity and Immortality.

The individual as a finite being inevitably becomes conscious, in his

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upward ascent, of his limitation and incapacity; and he comes to realise that the original source of this incapacity lies in the separation of Mind from the divine knowledge of Supermind. In this present state the individual is beset not only by his own limitation but also by the limitation of Life itself, which thus has to express itself in the evolutionary ascent as the clash of, and struggle against, opposing forces. The triple mask of Death, Desire and Strife represents this present stage of Life's struggle to evolve and ascend to a higher level.

N. PEARSON

Give your will entirely to the Divine and it will feel free
from the imposition of any human will.

19-9-53

THE MOTHER

THE HUMAN CYCLE

(An abridgement)

(Continued from the last issue)

CHAPTER XVII

RELIGION AS THE LAW OF LIFE

SINCE the infinite is our secret summit and the Divine our ultimate goal, reason cannot be the directing light of all our life and action. As the Asiatic mind always suggests, religion is that light. On the other hand, modern Europe which has progressed through reason, has attacked and rejected it. The revolt in its extreme form tried to destroy religion altogether, indeed boasted of having killed the religious instinct in man. More moderately, it put religion aside in a corner believing that it must always be a form for reaction and retardation. We need not follow the rationalistic or atheistic mind through all its aggressive indictments. But we must see the root of the evil which is not in religion itself, but in its infrarational parts, in our ignorant human confusion of religion with a particular creed, sect, cult, religious society or Church. Here lies the secret of the divergence between the ancient and the modern, the Eastern and Western ideal, and here also one clue to their reconciliation. There are two aspects of religion, true religion, which is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, and religionism which entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or emphasises intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, some fixed and rigid moral code, some religio-political or religio-social system. Not that these things are altogether negligible, but they are aids and supports, not the essence.

But here comes in an ambiguity which brings in a deeper source of divergence. For by spirituality religion seems often to mean something remote from earthly life and hostile to it. Then obviously religion has no positive message for human society. This quarrel becomes still more sterilising if

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spirituality takes the form of a religion of sorrow and suffering and austere mortification and the gospel of the vanity of things. The Western recoil from religion, that making of our ordinary earthly life our one preoccupation, was an opposite error, the contrary ignorant extreme. The monastic attitude, on its side, implies a fear and an aversion, and one cannot wisely guide that with which one is entirely out of sympathy. The spiritual man who can guide human life towards perfection is typified in the ancient Indian idea of the Rishi, one who has lived fully the life of man and found the word of the supra-intellectual, spiritual truth. In spirituality, then, understood in this sense, we must seek for the discerning light and the harmonising law, as a drawing back from life to envelop it without being dominated by it, and in religion in so far as it identifies itself with this spirituality. Spirituality will respect all the fundamental parts of our being, only it will be vigilant to illuminate them so that they may grow into the light and law of the spirit, for all these are potentialities of the spirit.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE INFRARATIONAL AGE OF THE CYCLE

In spirituality then would lie our only hope for the perfection of the individual or of communal man; not the spirit which for its separate satisfaction turns away from the earth and her works, but the greater spirit which surpasses and yet accepts and fulfils them. Certainly this will not come about easily, though a subjective age makes this at least possible, raising at the same time to active power things which seem to be the very denial of such a possibility.

We have seen that there are necessarily three stages of the social evolution, or generally of the human evolution. It starts with an infrarational stage, proceeds towards a rational age, finally, if our analysis and forecast are correct, it must move through a subjective towards a spiritual age. These stages or periods need not be naturally exclusive and absolute but they are much more inevitable in the psychological evolution of mankind than the Stone and other Ages, for they depend on the very nature of his being.

Thus an infrarational period of human and social development need not be without its elements of reason and spirituality, because we have lost its point of view and its principle of mental associations. The infrarational

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stage may, in course of development, arrive at a very lofty order of civilisation. In this stage pure reason and pure spirituality will not govern the society or more large bodies of men, but it will be represented, if at all, by individuals. This may well lead to an age of great intellectual thinkers, as seems to be represented by the tradition of the beginnings of civilisation. Or if spirituality predominates, there will be great mystics, as is obscurely indicated in the old traditions of the Mysteries. In prehistoric India we see it take a peculiar and unique turn which determined the whole future trend of the society and made Indian civilisation a thing apart and of its own kind in the history of the human race. But these things are only a first beginning of light in the midst of a humanity which is still infrarational.

As reason and spirituality develop, they begin to become a larger and more diffuse force, less intense perhaps, but wider and more effective on the mass. The mystics become the sowers of the seed of an immense spiritual development in which whole classes seek the light, as happened in India in the age of the Upanishads. The spiritual development arising uncurbed by reason in an infrarational society, has often a tendency to outrun at first the rational and intellectual movement. But these early dawns cannot endure in their purity, so long as the race is not ready, so long as the hour of the rational age has not arrived. At this point we see Nature in her human mass tends to move forward slowly on her various lines of mind and life. First, while she developed thought and reason and spirituality by exceptional individuals, now she develops them in the mass by exceptional communities or nations. But the exceptional nation is surrounded or neighboured by enormous masses of the old infrarational humanity and endangered by this menacing proximity, and it always collapses in the end before the attack of the outer darkness.

But even within the communities themselves reason and spirituality are hampered and endangered by existing in a milieu and atmosphere not their own and, except in individuals, a free play of the reason or the free light of the spirit is not possible. There is, farther, always the danger of these elements gravitating downward to the ignorance below or even collapsing into it. Finally, she reaches the point when, all immediate danger of collapse overcome, she can proceed to her next decisive advance in the cycle of social evolution. This must take the form of an attempt to universalise first of all the habit of reason and the application of the intellectual will to life. Thus is instituted the rational age of human society, of reason as the guiding force of the entire existence of the race.

SISIR KUMAR GHOSH

REVIEW

The New Gita: An Immortal Song. By *Wesley La Violette*. De Voress & Co, 843 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles 14, California. Price \$2.50

Sri Aurobindo believed that a free India returned to her great spiritual ideal but on new and larger lines was destined to be the means of uplifting the world and initiating a new age of the general evolution and it was towards this ideal that all his work was directed. In his historic message on Independence Day, the 15th of August 1947, he mentioned, as one of the aims and ideals cherished by him, "the gift by India of her spiritual knowledge and her means for the spiritualisation of life to the whole race." He saw with satisfaction: "The spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure.... That movement will grow; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice." The book under review is a positive proof of this. The author is an eminent American writer who finds in the teachings of the Gita the spiritual basis which alone can bring true peace and prosperity to mankind. The invocation on the cover page of this excellently got-up edition is significant: "Let the peace and comfort of the mighty and glorious Gita lift you and your loved ones above the chaos and tragedy of war." It is to be hoped that our national leaders give the same importance to the Gita. Sri Aurobindo expected that his dream of India being the spiritual Guru of the world would be fulfilled by a new and free India. Lest free India be without any such vision and develop rather opposite tendencies he gave a warning in his message to the Andhra University on December 11, 1948. Some of us, in our love for a secular state, would accept a pattern of society based on the materialistic and economic interpretation of history coming from the West; we think it would not be out of place here to reiterate the warning of Sri Aurobindo in his own words: "There are deeper issues for India herself, since by following certain temp-

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ting directions she may conceivably become a nation like many others evolving an opulent industry and commerce, a powerful organisation of social and political life, an immense military strength, practising power-politics with a high degree of success, guarding and extending zealously her gains and her interests, dominating even a large part of the world, but in this apparently magnificent progression forfeiting its Swadharma, losing its soul. Then ancient India and her spirit might disappear altogether and we would have only one more nation like the others and that would be a real gain neither to the world nor to us. There is a question whether she can prosper more harmlessly in the outward life yet lose altogether her richly massed and firmly held spiritual experience and knowledge. It would be a tragic irony of fate if India were to throw away her spiritual heritage at the very moment when in the rest of the world there is more and more a turning towards her for spiritual help and a saving Light. This must not and will surely not happen; but it cannot be said that the danger is not there."

It may be legitimately asked in what way a spiritual book like the Gita can help us to solve our national and international problems, and all sponsors of spirituality must be able to give a proper answer to this question. It is now generally admitted that as Science has made the world physically one, there cannot be real peace and prosperity for mankind unless all the peoples of the world can be brought within one organisation; but this unification cannot be achieved simply by external means, though that also is necessary, but there must be found a community of ideas and ideals which would form the sure foundation of human unity. It is obvious that this common human ideal cannot be got from materialism, atheism or a materialistic interpretation of history, though this philosophy has a strange attraction for some of our intellectuals whose mind has been formed by western education. But how many people in India, or, for that matter, in the world will agree to deny God and turn their temples, churches and mosques into art galleries and dancing halls? It is true that religion up to this time has not united humanity, it has rather been the cause of conflicts and wars which have brought immense sufferings on mankind, but that is because on account of the ignorance in which men are now living they have not been able to realise that there is only one God and that all religions essentially teach the same thing and uphold the same goal. It is here that comes the utility of the Gita at the present dangerous crisis in human affairs, and it is the merit of the *New Gita* that it has clearly shown how the Gita contains the essence of all religions and how all humanity can accept the

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Gita as their one scripture; it does not deny the truth of any religion but brings out their fundamental unity. Thus the Lord says in the Gita,

But whatever way men seek for Me,
by that path I seek and welcome them,
for the path men take from every side,
the road that leads from everywhere is Mine. (*New Gita* p. 49)

All who have the same faith, follow the same path naturally come together, thus we have the Christian Church, the Muslim brotherhood, the Buddhist samgha; but in the catholic teaching of the Gita, the whole of humanity is the samgha, all are following the same goal, each in his own way, and the Gita gives a *dharma*, a spiritual discipline which includes in it and synthesises all other disciplines and modes of spiritual practice. Indeed La Violette has shown that if in the Gita we read Christ for Krishna the sense does not suffer at all, but all Christians can find in the Gita the sublime teachings of the Bible in a new light. Let us give one or two illustrations.

The Christ incarnated replied:

My blessings and My Peace
upon 'you, beloved student!

I will acquaint you with
the chief characteristics of My
divine glory and its manifestations here,

These few must suffice
the throbbing pulse of Time
for My essential Nature is beyond Time,
outside of space, unlimited,
and My Being, Mind, is Infinite.

I am the divine Overself
living in the heart of every man;
Self indivisible from SELF;
the beginning, middle, and also end
of every being everywhere;
I am the image that you see
reflected in every water, every pool.

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Then the young Prince
spoke to his Master:

O creator, supreme Ruler of the Universe,
though you have described yourself
as consummate rarest Being,
I yearn for a final token of your love,
 one more vista of supremacy,
for I desire to see your SELF;
the ethereal beauty of your face,
desire to be enraptured
 by your glory and divinity of Form,

The Blessed Christ-in-Man
answered him:

Since you would see immortal beauty
with your mortal eyes
I now endow your soul
with mystic vision and insight
 to see the Form of Me:—
immeasurable, divinely fired
 colors and forms,
uncountable in multiplicity of kinds.

Behold the heavenly hosts,
innumerable celestial beings,—
angels, archangels; planetary gods;
sovereigns of vast universes;
and many other radiant wonders
scarcely dreamed of in your wildest fancies,
 never seen before.

Then the young Prince
fell prostrate before the God-man,
and trembling, stammering with fear,
with saddened face,

 in broken accents, said:
O Christ, the world rejoices,
the firmament and earth are shouting

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your magnificence and glory;
The hordes of darkness flee in terror
before the onset of your light,
while the enlightened Ones,
who know and walk upon your path,
sing your praises, offer adoration
with humility, and wonder at your sight.

The Christ replied:

He who does all actions only for Me,
who thinks all thoughts through Me,
whose supreme treasure, whose All in All,
is found in Me, in My Kingdom of Universal Mind;

The true follower of My golden Light,
who holds dominion, freed from attachment,
forsaking everything for Me, his goal,
who places inner Wisdom
beyond the price of earthly things;
who finds his peace, salvation,
only in loving all, and in all loving;
he shall finally come to Me,

O son of royal blood,
for he and I are One
secure eternally.

Ernest Holmes has aptly commented on the book: "To take a sacred book that is read and studied daily by millions of people, and interpret the spirit and meaning into the thought and language of another world of another period, making its philosophy and teachings available to millions of another race, presents a great spiritual contribution to the literature of the world."

Those who think that they can establish equality and justice in society by reorganising the means of production and distribution, fail to see that the root cause of social evils lies in the nature of men, in their ignorant egoism, giving rise to desire and greed and passions, to lust of power and lust of possession, and that there cannot be any real improvement in the condition of men unless human nature can be changed and transformed radically. The Gita, following the Upanishads gives the secret of this transformation, which is to find the Eternal Self in us, and to base all our life and action on the

consciousness of the Self. As distinguished from a materialistic interpretation of history given by Marx and Engels, Sri Aurobindo has given a spiritualistic interpretation of history in *The Human Cycle* (The Psychology of Social Development) showing that human history is not being shaped by economic forces but by the needs of man to find his Self and his relation with the Divine, economic organisation can only serve as one of the accessory means. "Man's true way out is to discover his soul and its self-force and instrumentation and replace by it both the mechanisation of mind and the ignorance and disorder of life-nature. But there would be little room and freedom for such a movement of self-discovery and self-effectuation in a closely regulated and mechanised social existence." (*The Life Divine*, P. 1167, first edition). That is why Sri Aurobindo did not accept any socialistic pattern of society but a spiritualised society as the goal for India as well as for whole mankind. "Therefore a society which was even initially spiritualised, would make the revealing and finding of the divine Self in man the whole first aim of all its activities, its education, its knowledge, its science, its ethics, its art, its economical and political structure. As it was to some extent in the ancient Vedic times with the cultural education of the higher classes, so it would be then with all education." (*The Human Cycle*, P. 317). For this spiritual education, which is now to be given to all irrespective of cast, creed, sex or race, the Gita is the best medium. But it is here that the *New Gita* of La Violette is lacking. It selects some of the thoughts of the Gita which are generally known and puts them in free verse which is intellectually satisfying; but it cannot serve as substitute for the original Gita, as it has neither its *mantra shakti* which opens the doors of the soul nor does it bring out the subtle and profound teachings of the Gita which can practically help us to find the divine Self within. A true and helpful interpretation of the Gita is possible only for those who have at least some of the profound spiritual experience of the great author of the Gita itself. In our age we have had only one such person, and that is Sri Aurobindo and we have no hesitation in saying that if we approach the Gita for help and light and to understand its essential and living message, that in it on which humanity has to seize for its perfection and its highest spiritual welfare, we must take Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita* as our guiding light.

We shall conclude this review by selecting from the book at random some of the common errors found in the modern interpretations of the Gita. Thus the new Gita upholds the modern ideal of Duty and the service of mankind as the teaching of the Gita. But how to know what is our duty, and what will

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really be a service to humanity? At the present moment the world is divided into two blocs, each of which is claiming to be the true servant of human welfare and to establish their claim they are preparing for a fight which may result in the extinction of the whole human race. The Gita says that it is beyond human reason to find a solution for these questions, one must rise to a higher plane, to a higher consciousness, and act and live from there. La Violette has nowhere brought out this essential distinction, and following the western mode, he confuses the higher spiritual consciousness with mental consciousness and reason. Thus he says

Partaking of those things that partake of immortality,
they go to the ETERNAL, beyond earth's transient forms.
This unending, changeless world of Spirit, world of Mind.

He completely ignores the Gita's crucial distinction between mental reason and the Spirit,

"Supreme, they say, (beyond their objects) are the senses, supreme over the senses the mind, supreme over the mind the intelligent will: that which is supreme over the intelligent will, is he (the Pûrusha)." (Gita 3/42). It is this Pûrusha, the Spirit that we must find within us following the light given by the Gita in order to enter into the spiritual divine life which is the goal of man.

However, as we have already said, this book can very well serve as an introduction to the Gita especially to the western people. "A paramount need for an ordered world in the post war period", says Mr. Syed Hossain in appreciation of the book, "is better understanding between the East and West. Every conscientious attempt to foster such understanding should be welcomed....The message of the Gita is one of the greatest spiritual formulations of all time, and has a special appeal in these troubled days."

A.B.

New Book!

Just Out!

THE DAWN ETERNAL

—The Secret of India's Evolution—

BY

SISIRKUMAR MITRA

“This book, based on the teachings of Sri Aurobindo, reveals India the Mother, the living embodiment of the great spiritual conception of the Unity of all Life. This Unity is the central ideal that has since the dawn of time inspired India's culture and is her message to humanity....The chapter “The Age of the Spirit” is a magnificent exposition of the stages of India's luminous Spiritual dawns from the Rigvedic Age to the Vedantic resurgence which continues even to this day.”

The Sunday Standard, Madras

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